

Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications and other research outputs

Exploring Teacher Professional Identity With Teachers of English of a Secondary School in Senegal

Thesis

How to cite:

Diop, Dame (2016). Exploring Teacher Professional Identity With Teachers of English of a Secondary School in Senegal. MRes thesis The Open University.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 2016 The Author



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000ef53>

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk

The Open University

Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies

Exploring teacher professional identity with teachers of English of a secondary school in Senegal

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the degree of Master of Research

By

Dame Diop MA (English), CAES, MA TESOL (Teacher Education)

Supervisors:

Ms Freda Wolfenden

Dr Ian Eyres

September 2016

DATE OF SUBMISSION: 7 SEPTEMBER 2016

DATE OF AWARD: 15 DECEMBER 2016

ProQuest Number: 13834609

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 13834609

Published by ProQuest LLC (2019). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Acknowledgements

This study has been accomplished with valuable contributions from several people.

First of all, I would like express my sincere gratitude to my Supervisors, Ms Freda Wolfenden and Dr Ian Eyres for their guidance all the way through my work. They have shown tremendous generosity in sharing their knowledge and expertise and a genuine commitment to my success. I appreciate their patience, availability and support.

Thanks too to Dr Alan Floyd for his guidance in qualitative data analysis.

I would like also to express my heartfelt thanks to CREET for granting me this studentship which has made it possible to do this MRes.

Sincere thanks also to the MRes programme tutors, Prof Martyn Hammersley and Prof John Richardson. Thank you very much to Anne Forward as well for her help throughout this journey.

Many thanks to all people who helped me in my data collection in Senegal. Thanks to my senior colleague, Vincent Camara, for introducing me to the headteacher of my research site. I am also grateful to the headteacher of SAHS School, in Rufisque, for granting me permission to collect data at his school and to all the teachers who agreed to participate in this study.

Finally, these thanks are extended to my colleague research students for their advice and support.

Abstract

This study takes a sociocultural approach to teacher professional identity to explore how a small group of teachers of English in Senegal see themselves as teachers, the different contextual elements that might influence their perceptions and the relationship which exists between the latter and their practice. As shown in the literature, teacher professional identity has been of interest to educational researchers for a number of years (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day et al., 2006 and Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015). This is due to its significance in teacher education both at pre-service and in-service levels. A number of studies have established an interrelation between how teachers see themselves as professionals, their sociocultural environments, and working contexts (Lasky, 2005; Smit & Fritz, 2008; Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015). A small group of teachers of English working in one Senegalese secondary school were studied using a variety of qualitative data collection instruments. They were first interviewed, observed in classrooms and then interviewed again. Data were also collected as field notes from observations about the school and participation in a pedagogical cell meeting. The analysis of the data through ‘crafting profiles’ (Seidman, 2006) and thematic analysis has shown that participants have different perceptions of their professional identities such as ‘knowledge provider’, ‘role model’, and ‘advice giver’ and they enact these in various ways. The findings suggest that much importance needs to be given to discussions about matters related to teacher professional identity itself and its relationship with practice in in-service teacher training activities. This study has also highlighted the importance of school culture in the formation and enactment of teacher professional identity. Hence, it is significant that educational authorities give due consideration to the institutional level when making policies and planning for enactment of policy in practice.

List of Tables

Table 1.....21

Table 2.....22

List of Appendices

Appendix A.....64

Appendix B.....66

Appendix C.....66

Appendix D.....67

Appendix E.....68

Appendix F.....70

Appendix G.....71

Appendix H.....72

Appendix I.....73

Appendix J.....74

Contents

Acknowledgementsi

Abstractii

List of Tablesiii

List of Appendices.....iii

CHAPTER ONE: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND OBJECTIVES.....01

1.1 An overview the Senegalese education system.....01

1.2 The status of English in Senegal.....02

1.3 Teacher education and training.....03

1.4 Objectives.....04

1.5 The outline of the report.....05

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW07

2.1 The sociocultural approach.....07

2.2 Teacher professional identity in educational research.....08

2.3 Understanding the concept of teacher professional identity.....10

2.3.1 Teacher professional identity viewed by teachers.....11

2.3.2 Teacher professional identity viewed by others.....12

2.3.3 Teacher professional identity viewed in relation to pedagogy.....13

2.4 Influencing factors for the formation of teacher professional identity.....14

2.4.1 Contextual influencing factors for teacher professional identity14

2.4.2 Personal influencing factors for teacher professional identity.....16

2.5 Teacher professional identity and practice.....17

2.6 Summary of the literature review.....18

2.7 The research questions.....19

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION.....20

3.1 Research approach.....20

3.2 Research site and participants.....20

3.3 Descriptions of data collection instruments.....22

3.3.1 Individual interviews.....23

3.3.2 Classroom observation.....25

3.3.3 Participating in a pedagogical cell meeting.....26

3.4 Data analysis.....26

3.5 Ethical considerations.....27

CHAPTER FOUR: COLLECTING AND ANALYSING THE DATA.....28

4.1 Process of data collection.....28

4.2 Participants’ profiles.....29

4.2.1 Bilali’s profile.....29

4.2.2 Lamro’s profile.....32

4.2.3 Maya’s profile.....34

4.2.4 Nura’s profile.....36

4.2.5 Yuga’s profile.....38

4.3 A short synthesis of the teachers’ profiles.....40

4.4 The school’s ethos.....43

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETING THE DATA.....44

5.1 Diversity between participants.....44

5.2 Influence of societal views on teacher professional identity.....45

5.3 The influence of the school culture on teacher professional identity.....47

5.4 Individual factors influencing teacher professional identity.....49

5.5 National education policy, teacher professional identity and practice.....51

CHAPTER SIX: MAIN FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LESSONS, AND RESEARCH THEMES.....53

6.1 Main findings.....53

6.2 Limitations54

6.3 Implications55

6.4 Lessons.....56

6.5 Research themes.....57

REFERENCES.....58

CHAPTER ONE: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter starts with a brief overview of the Senegalese education system. It then introduces English as a Foreign Language in Senegal with a focus on its status as a curriculum subject. The third section deals with teacher education (both pre-service and in-service) for teachers of English. The fourth and the fifth sections respectively present the main objectives of this study and the outline of the report.

1.1 An overview the Senegalese education system

The current Senegalese educational system is largely a heritage from the French colonial period, though many changes have been made since the country became independent in 1960. As such, French is used as the language of instruction at all levels of public education from preschool to university. It is a country in which people, the educational authorities included, give importance to national exams which students have to sit at the end of each cycle (primary, junior high school, senior high school). Consequently, teachers are often judged by the communities where they work through the results of their students in those exams.

For a long time, teaching had been mostly seen as a transmission of knowledge and learning as an exercise of memorisation and a capacity of regurgitating what has been taught. In the past three decades, there has been a move to change. Now, it is a strong recommendation to apply a competence-based approach at almost all levels of education (Les Assises de l'Education du Senegal, 2014)¹. Senegalese educational authorities, as in many other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, have been promoting a learner-centred approach for some years now (Miyazaki, 2016). Many of the Senegalese current in-service

¹ 'Les Assises de l'Education du Senegal' is a document published by the Ministry of education in which the Senegalese educational goals are revisited, the strengths and weaknesses of its education system shown, and many recommendations made for its betterment.

teacher training activities revolve around the implementation of this approach in classrooms. However, it has been noticed that the transition has yet to be totally effective as there are teachers who still see teaching as mainly being a transmission of knowledge, which might be related to the fact that many of them have been educated through a teacher-centred approach.

1.2 The status of English in Senegal

English is studied as a foreign language in Senegal like many others such as German, Spanish, Arabic, and so on. However, English is the only language which is compulsory for all secondary school students. Its introduction in the education system dates back to colonial times. English is a very important language for Senegal because it is considered as a means to help achieve the country's main educational goals which are, among others, to have citizens who are well-rooted in their culture and enough open to other cultures of the world, citizens who can take up the challenges of developing the country and citizens who are able to work and live in every part of the world (Thiam, 2013).

English is also seen as strategic language in that it can help in many of the country's international relationships. In addition to that, having good English language skills, which is recognised as an asset for economic gain in North African countries (Erling, 2015), is a requirement to work in many international companies operating in Senegal. With all these considerations, teaching English is given considerable importance both at central and local levels of the education system. In terms of teaching approaches, it is a recommendation to teach English communicatively (Programme National d'Anglais du Senegal, 2006). Many efforts have been being deployed to help both novice and experienced teachers apply a learner-centred approach so as to enhance active learning and student achievement.

1.3 Teacher education and training

Normally, all teachers of English are trained at the Faculty of Education of Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar before starting teaching. Teachers of English at the secondary level can be classified into three different categories. Those who have their 'Baccalaureat' (A levels) with a good level of English have a two-year training after which they can teach at junior high schools often at beginner levels. The second group is those who have their BA in English. They take a one-year training and are designated teachers for junior high schools though they can teach at senior high schools when needed. The last group are those who have an MA in English. They have a two-year training after which they will be teaching at senior high schools. However, it is worth mentioning that in the past twenty years many teachers have entered the system without initial training. For example, Coleman (2013) found that 41% of the teachers of English he surveyed in Senegal had no professional preparation.

In-service teacher training is mostly done through school based pedagogical cells for teachers of the same subject. Teachers of a cell regularly meet so as to plan standardised tests, share experiences or discuss any issue related to teaching. At a higher level, all cells of the schools of the same area constitute a mixed pedagogical cell. Each cell is led by a coordinator, a teacher nominated by their colleagues, who is in charge of organising and reporting its activities. All those activities are coordinated by in-service teacher trainers based at the regional training centres.

These trainers are responsible for in-service teacher training for all teachers; both novice and experienced ones. In that capacity, their activities consist in, among others, disseminating seminars done at the national level, mentoring teachers who are undergoing training for a professional degree, and coordinating district-level standardised tests. It is also a great part of their responsibilities to explain any changes related to teaching and

testing to teachers and accompany them in their implementation. For example, most in-service teacher training activities in recent years have been framed around applying principles of a learner-centred approach in teaching English.

1.4 Objectives

As an in-service teacher trainer, I have always been interested in learning ways of helping teachers to improve their practice. In fact, helping teachers deliver quality teaching is at the heart of our responsibilities. This is not easy at all in that teachers often have different understandings about teaching and, consequently, different ways of practising. In my work, I have noticed that many teachers do not apply what has often been dealt with in in-service training activities. Obviously, wanting to make teachers do the same thing is not achievable and may even be undesirable. However, teachers' having a common understanding of their ways of teaching is something very important for their learners and the whole education system. The current move towards a learner-centred approach requires a revision of some teachers' professional identities as, for example, they are no longer seen as the only sources of knowledge in the class. All this makes it very interesting for me to investigate how teachers perceive themselves as teachers.

In conducting this research, my main objective is to start to investigate how teachers understand, express, and enact their professional identity in the Senegalese context. Several studies about teacher professional identity carried out in various contexts have given many insights about teacher professional identity and some have established a strong link between teacher professional identity and practice (Beijaard et al. 2000; Beijaard et al., 2004; Sachs, 2001; Watson, 2006; Day et al., 2006). This study explores how a small group of English teachers of a secondary school in Senegal perceive themselves as professionals and the different roles that they think they should play to enact those

perceptions. Elements that may have an influence on the formation of those perceptions such as their previous learning and/or teaching experiences, education, values, and the school environment where they work will be explored. It also aims at developing understandings about the relationship between teacher professional identity and teachers' practice.

The expected outcomes of this research are twofold. Firstly, it will allow me to carry out research and gain some experience in empirical work in this context. It is an opportunity to test the quality of my research questions, the appropriateness of my methodology, the efficiency of the data collection methods, my capacity to analyse qualitative data, and the research design as a whole. Secondly, it will give me more insights about teacher professional identity in the context of Senegal and other similar contexts, which will be useful for my PhD study on integrating reflexive practices in in-service teacher training for professional development.

1.5 The outline of the report

After this first chapter which has introduced the Senegalese EFL context and the aims of this study, the second one reviews the literature. Chapter two focuses on the different understandings of teacher professional identity, the various influencing factors and its relationship with practice. The third chapter gives details of the methodology used in this study. The fourth chapter presents the collected data. It starts with a section on the process of data collection, continues with the profiles of the five participants followed by a short synthesis of the profiles and ends with observations on the school's ethos. The fifth chapter discusses ideas from the data in five different sections. The first section deals with the diversity between participants. The three sections that come after it are about influencing elements for teacher professional identity. The fifth section of that chapter

discusses the relationship between national education policy, teacher professional identity and practice. The last chapter presents a summary of the main findings, some limitations of the study, implications, lessons I have learnt through this experience, and research themes that could follow this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter begins with an introduction of the sociocultural approach to which this study on teacher professional identity adheres. It then continues with a section on the interest of educational researchers in the notion of teacher professional identity followed by another one which presents the understandings of teacher professional identity from different angles. Later on, the various factors that are seen as influencing for teacher professional identity and its relationship with practice are dealt with. The last section presents the main research questions.

2.1 The sociocultural approach

Ontologically, sociocultural researchers see identity from a non-dualist perspective, which means that it does not exist in isolation from society (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995). In this respect, identities are considered as not solely constructed by individuals themselves nor by society alone but through a dynamic interrelation between individuals and society (Lasky, 2005). The sociocultural approach is generally understood as an epistemological research stance which sees individuals and the society in which they are as two elements in a mutual relation. From this perspective, the ‘social processes and individual functioning’ (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995) are not two separate dimensions but they are rather intricately linked to each other. In other words, social aspects and individual identities are in a constant interaction in that the individuals’ views and behaviours are shaped through their participation in the activities of the society in which they are part of but, in turn, they also shape their society’s norms and standards. A sociocultural approach allows to explore identity taking account of the various factors at different levels, personal and contextual, that influence its formation and enactment. However, this approach may overlook some personal aspects of identity which, arguably, might not be necessary related to society.

Applying this approach to teacher professional identity, it can be said that it is understood in relation the environment where teacher work (Lasky, 2005; Penuel and Wertsch, 1995). This means that teacher professional identity is under the influence of the society in its broader sense. However, as said above, the relationship between the individual and the society is seen as dynamic and mutually constructed. In this way, it becomes an interrelationship. Therefore, exploring teacher professional identity done through the sociocultural approach does not dissociate the individual from the society. With this approach, due consideration is given to the significance of the social contexts where teachers live and work. As such, teacher professional identity is seen as formed through the interrelation of both personal and contextual elements. Thus, the following section of this review is done by taking account of societal views of teaching, educational policies, and personal elements that may have an influence on teacher professional identity.

2.2 Teacher professional identity in educational research

The notion of teacher professional identity has been of interest to many educational researchers for a number of years (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day et al., 2006 and Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015) due to its importance in teacher education at both pre-service and in-service levels. Because of the wide scope of definitions in use, I start by borrowing scholarly positions about identity and professionalism from Burns and Richards (2009); they note identity ‘reflects how individuals see themselves and how they enact their roles within different settings’ (p.5). As for teacher professionalism, they define this in relation to ‘recognized qualifications’, ‘standards’ attainment and abiding by ‘the rules and norms that prevail in their context of work’ (p.3). From these considerations, teacher professional identity is seen not only to concern aspects related to the teacher as a person and the practiced profession but also to the socio-cultural environment where that identity is

enacted. This importance of taking account of those aspects in understanding teacher professional identity has been stressed by Beijaard et al. (2004) and Tateo (2012), and echoed in many other educational research studies.

In their review of a number of studies concerned with teacher professional identity, Beijaard et al. (2004) found that teacher professional identity has been explored for various purposes and using different methods, ranging from surveys to in-depth interviews to generate quantitative but mostly qualitative data. The scrutiny of these studies has allowed them to identify three different foci on research on teacher professional identity: its formation, its characteristics, and its 'representation by teachers' stories'.

Research on professional identity in teaching has been studied with different types of teachers working in a diversity of contexts. For example, in Europe (Beijard et al., 2000; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013), Asia (Lim, 2011; Oruç, 2012), Africa (Welmond, 2002 and Smit and Fritz, 2008), and in Canada (Lasky, 2005). The same diversity is noticed with participants; while some studies have been done with beginning teachers (Oruç, 2012; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Lim, 2011; Piller et al., 2013) others have been interested in studying teacher professional identity with experienced teachers (Beijaard et al., 2000; Welmond, 2002 and Smit and Fritz, 2008; Farrell, 2011).

It is noteworthy that no specific study on teacher professional identity conducted in the research setting, Senegal, has been found. Although Welmond's (2002) context of study, Benin, has some similarities with Senegal, with regards to teachers' status, the focus of this study is different. Welmond's research was heavily concerned with the history of teacher identity in Benin through the analysis of various documents and interviews with different stakeholders across the education system, the present study takes a much smaller in-depth look at how a small group of secondary school teachers of English perceive and enact their professional identity.

With such a diversity of interests in the field, the rest of this literature review tries to put together a number of different elements from different studies which are concerned with the understandings of the notion of professional identity, the different factors which may have an influence on it and its interrelationship with teachers' practice.

2.3 Understanding the concept of teacher professional identity

In educational research, teacher professional identity has not been understood as straightforward among specialists. In fact, there is no universally accepted definition of teacher professional identity (Beijaard et al., 2004; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Pillen et al., 2013). This reality is clearly recognised by Pillen et al. (2013) when they state that 'in general, researchers who study teachers' professional identity differ in terms of how they define, view, and study this concept' (p.87). This lack of uniformity can be the result of the difficulty which lies in giving an all-capturing meaning of the notion of 'identity', sometimes referred to as 'self' (Day et al. 2006) or commonly understood as 'a personal sense of self' (Eyres, in press), which is related to both personal and social considerations (Welmond, 2002; Watson, 2006). In a broader sense, drawing on the literature (Beijaard et al., 2004, Lasky, 2005), the concept of teacher professional identity can be understood by focusing on teachers' views of themselves as teachers, on other people's understanding of teaching or on its relation to pedagogy. These three ways of understanding teacher professional identity are in a strong interrelation as each one shapes, and is shaped by, the others.

2.3.1 Teacher professional identity viewed by teachers

When viewed by teachers, professional identity can be seen as a means for teachers to define who they are and how they want to be considered (McLure, 1993). In her longitudinal study with Canadian teachers, Lasky (2005) advocates that ‘teacher professional identity is how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others’ (p.901). Here, she puts teachers at the centre of teacher professional identity as ‘teachers are in the best position to know themselves’ (Oruç, 2012:209). The quintessence of this understanding of professional identity lies in the fact that it stresses the importance for teachers to define who they are for themselves in relation to their working context. From this perspective, teacher professional identity consists of the perceptions that teachers have of themselves as professionals within their sociocultural environment (Coldron & Smith, 1999 and MacLure, 1993 cited in Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013:121).

This way of seeing professional identity, which puts teachers at the centre, resonates with what Sachs (2001) calls an ‘activist identity’ which stems from a ‘democratic professionalism’ discourse about teaching in her explanation of two competing discourses about teacher professional identity in Australia. From the ‘activist identity’ standpoint, teachers are entrusted with a certain freedom in the way they view and do their job. In fact, what seems to be very interesting in this perspective is that the notion of teacher professional identity, strongly linked to the perceptions teachers have of themselves, plays a significant role in the way teachers define their profession and, consequently, do their job (Beijaard et al., 2000; Sachs, 2001; Watson, 2006). Viewed from this angle, the perception of teachers of their roles may be much related to what their cultures and/or their political authorities have set as norms of being a teacher (Welmond, 2002; Tateo, 2012). Hence, teachers are obliged to integrate, to a certain degree, other people’s views about teaching in their own professional identity perceptions. By accepting it as such, the way others see teachers becomes significant in understanding teacher identity as they cannot exist as

professionals without the recognition of other people such as parents, students, policy makers and so on.

2.3.2 Teacher professional identity viewed by others

Teachers are part of the society, which means that other people also will have their own views of teaching (Welmond, 2002; Beijaard et al., 2004; Lasky, 2005; Abednia, 2012; Pillen et al., 2013). In other words, teacher professional identity is also, necessarily, about how the society sees teachers (Watson, 2006). This social aspect might even be a very determinant factor on the way teachers see themselves as they are but the products of their society and are under its influence even unknowingly. In his study of teacher identity in South Africa, Welmond (2002), found that there is a strong link between the ways teachers see themselves and how the state defines them. This means that teachers' professional identity cannot escape from the views of the others; be it the school and the local community at a smaller scale and/or the state and the whole society at a larger scale.

This view is aligned with the notion of 'entrepreneurial identity' developed by Sachs (2001) which sees teachers as professionals, like in other sectors, who should abide by rules and be accountable as well. With such a position, which seems to be shared by many school authorities around the world, teachers are rather imposed a way of seeing and doing their job. The reality is that teachers cannot free themselves from other people's views of their profession nor can people completely impose their views on teachers who are the very agents of their profession.

The two positions are not exclusive to each other, they are rather in constant interaction, in that teacher professional identity cannot be understood without taking into account the society and culture of the context of study (Lasky, 2005).

2.3.3 Teacher professional identity viewed in relation to pedagogy

The understanding of teacher professional identity can also be based on how the 'profession' of teaching is done, what it encompasses, the different roles that teachers play and so on. From this standpoint, Beijaard et al. (2000), in their study with experienced secondary school teachers from the Netherlands, proposed three orientations towards the profession which can be used to investigate teacher professional identity: subject matter expert', 'didactical expert', and 'pedagogical expert'. While the first type focuses on the importance of subject knowledge, the second is about having a clear understanding of the complex teaching/learning process and how to implement it effectively. The third type, which is more holistic, is concerned with dimensions such as ways of communicating with students for effective teaching, helping them to have a better understanding of social life and to grow up, and so on.

It is noteworthy that these categories are not exclusive to one another as teachers may adapt to the one they think as the most appropriate in their teaching circumstances. In fact, as identity is the 'self-image' that one has of oneself and may want to show to others, it is plausible that teachers adopt different professional identities at different moments. This point is in line with Sachs' (2001) position when she says that 'clearly teachers inhabit multiple professional identities' (p.155) which they adapt in different contexts. Arguably, the teaching circumstances can have a big impact on the formation of teacher professional identity and the ways it is enacted.

2.4 Influencing factors for the formation of teacher professional identity

Despite their disagreement in adopting a common definition of teacher professional identity, researchers accept its dynamic nature (McLure, 1993; Beijaard et al. 2004; Day et al. 2006; Watson, 2006; Piller et al., 2013; Oruç, 2012; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Floyd & Fuller, 2016; Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015) and that it may be under the influence of many factors. This dynamism of identity is visibly noticed in some of the terminologies used in some studies. For instance, the use of ‘a continuum’ (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013:121), ‘identity construction’ (Watson, 2006:524), ‘dynamics of teacher identity’ (Welmond, 2002:37), ‘continuing development of identity’ (Oruç, 2012:208) and many others are very telling about the instability of teacher professional identity. Teacher professional identity can be influenced at various moments and by different elements which are both personal and contextual. Here, the terms personal and contextual are not used to express a mutual exclusion but considered to be in constant tension.

2.4.1 Contextual influencing factors for teacher professional identity

Some educational research studies have evidenced that teacher professional identity can be influenced by societal views about teaching (Welmond, 2002; Tateo, 2012), learning and teaching experiences, ‘professional training’ (Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015) and ‘school cultures’ (Beijaard, 1999), and by other aspects. These contextual influences for professional identity can be considered at different levels.

At a macro level, teaching, seen as a profession or not, is strongly linked to the vision the society has about education in general. Apart from the fact that teaching itself is an evolving profession and teachers constantly integrate new knowledge and skills, their identities also change because learners’ needs and curriculum demands are ever-changing. As such, ‘changes in society and education challenge the teaching profession’ (Tateo,

2012: 347) and, consequently, may require teachers to reconsider their professional identities. Such a change caused by external factors may happen in a context of educational reforms which often take place in many developing countries, and just as in developed ones, when new governments come into power or under the influence of some international organisations (Welmond, 2002). These types of reforms often put new demands on teachers which have the potential to affect their teacher professional identity.

At a meso level, the institution and the local community are far from being neutral to teacher professional identity. Drawing from Rodgers and Scott (2008), Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) stresses the significance of the influence that the immediate context may have on professional identity. In this study, the context of work should be understood more as people and how they see and do their work than the physical setting in which they work. The role of the working environment, the school in this study, plays in the formation teacher identity is very significant. For example, a teacher might get a lot of support from his or her school, which may be very determinant in forging a certain identity. The 'school culture'- how it is run, the values it promotes, the relationships that exist between different people, the non-teaching tasks that teachers are entrusted with and so on - can play a very significant role in teacher professional identity formation (Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015).

The different roles, elements of being a teacher, that they play in their schools can influence the ways they see themselves. Arguably, this can be seen as just playing roles. However, if identity is reflected through the perceptions that people have of themselves and through their enactment of roles in a context (Burns and Richards, 2009:5), then it looks very difficult, if not impossible, to dissociate teacher professional identity from the roles that teachers play in their schools. Cohen (2008, cited in Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009) considers 'both explicit and implicit understandings of teacher roles as ways to

discern and appreciate teacher identities’ (p.181). In other words, teacher identity can be made sense of through the roles that teachers play. In the same vein, Farrell (2010:55) used ‘professional role identity’ to explore the intricate link between personal aspects and contextual roles in relation to teacher identity.

The influence of the school is also stressed by Smit and Fritz (2008) in their study in South Africa when trying to understand the identities of two teachers serving in two different schools. They concluded that ‘the reality is that the power of the working environment, coupled with the personal and social identity, is a much stronger force in the development of teacher identity than national education policies’ (p.100). For example, in that study, Carol, one of the two participants who had different roles in the school, saw herself as a ‘mother’, a ‘nurse’, and a ‘disciplinarian’. Obviously, the school is not the only important element but, as shared by Cross & Ndofirepi, (2015), it is very influential in the negotiation of the professional identity of a teacher.

2.4.2 Personal influencing factors for teacher professional identity

Considering some personal aspects of teacher professional identity brings this review to the micro level of influencing factors. The way teacher professional identity is formed can be influenced by many personal elements such as beliefs, values and attitudes (Helms, 1998; Floyd & Fuller, 2016; Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015). From this perspective, it can be said that each teacher is likely to have a specific set of elements such their family background, personal beliefs and values, and learning experiences which have influenced the way s/he perceives her or his professional identity. This brings forth the complexity of the notion of identity and the role that subjectivity plays in it because identity can be seen

as 'a form of argument [...] both practical and theoretical' (McLure, 1993:312). So, teachers use it to make sense of themselves in relation to their working context.

The influence of personal factors can also be seen when the notion of change of identity is deeply explored. This is so when change is the product of the teachers' initiative; when a teacher has a certain agency in the type of professional identity he or she is building. As clearly proposed by Beijaard et al. (2004) 'identity is not something one has, but something that develops during one's whole life' (p. 107) which is why the formation of teacher professional identity is 'an ongoing process of integration of the 'personal' and the 'professional' sides of becoming and being a teacher' (p.113). In other words, identity is something that one constructs through the different stages of one's life.

2.5 Teacher professional identity and practice

The relationship between teacher professional identity and teachers' practice is firmly recognised in educational research (Beijaard et al., 2000; Watson, 2006, Sachs, 2001). Arguably, perceptions of oneself will always, somehow, have an influence on one's actions. However, that relationship is not one way (Watson, 2006) in that 'identity and practice mirror each other' (Sachs, 2001: 154). In this respect, it can be said that teacher professional identity, which is not static but dynamic, and practice, which is much dependent on context, are in a continual interrelationship. As stated by Watson (2006) 'the importance of the concept of professional identity lies in the assumption that who we think we are influences what we do' (p.510). From this perspective, teachers' perceptions of who they are can determine how they generally behave in their schools and particularly in their classrooms. Understanding this relation is all the more important as teachers' views of themselves influence 'their ability and willingness to cope with educational change and to

implement innovations in their own teaching practice' (Beijaard et al., 2000:750), which is very crucial in today's world that often requires educational reforms to keep pace with the ever-changing needs of learners.

All the elements which are related to teacher professional identity which are either personal or contextual do not always interrelate smoothly. Hence, teachers may experience what Pillen et al., (2013) call 'identity dissonance'. This happens when, for example, a teacher's views about teaching are different from those of the institution where they work (Beijaard et al., 2004). In such a case, it can be said that teachers may experience real difficulties in adapting their professional identity to the context.

2.6 Summary of the literature review

This review has mainly focussed on different understandings of teacher professional identity, the personal and contextual factors which influence it and its relation to teachers' practice. From all these different considerations, it can be said that teacher professional identity is worth investigating to improve teacher education at both pre-service and in-service levels. In fact, because how teachers perceive their own identities as professionals is in interaction with the way they teach, it is reasonable to try to have a clearer understanding of those perceptions. The studies reviewed have been undertaken with all types of teachers: teachers in their practicum, beginning teachers or experienced ones.

Different research methods, quantitative and qualitative, have been used either together or separately. Though research angles have been different, these studies consistently give due attention to teachers' views of their professional identity in relation to their teaching context and, on a wider scale, to their sociocultural environment. Although the previous

studies on teacher professional identity have been done over rather long periods, this present MRes study was done in a short time because of manageability reasons.

2.7 The research questions

This study aims at exploring teacher professional identity with a small group of teachers of English in one secondary school in Senegal. Its main objective is to discover how these teachers perceive their professional identities and the possible influence that their lives, their working environment and their previous teaching experiences may have on those perceptions. It also aims at gaining more understanding on how teacher professional identity interrelates with teachers' practice. As such, the main questions are as follows:

- 1- How do these secondary school teachers of English perceive, express, and enact their teacher professional identity through their different roles?
- 2- What elements in their lives, teaching and/or learning experience, and of the school culture may influence their perceptions of themselves as teachers?
- 3- How do these teachers' perceptions of professional identity interrelate with their practice?

It is worth mentioning that the research questions had been rather broad at the beginning but, with the guidance of my supervisors, they were narrowed down so that they became more focussed and manageable for this small scale study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Research approach

In this small scale qualitative study, I am using a sociocultural framework as the lens through which teacher professional identity is explored. This means that societal views and those of individuals are not seen as separate but as being in constant and mutual relation (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995, Lasky, 2005). As such, teacher professional identity is explored in relation to the teachers' subjectivities about their professional identities and the social context in which they are living and working, which stresses the significance of the context of study. The design of this qualitative study is hybrid in that I used both ethnographic (through my observations of lessons and other aspects related to teachers and the school) and narrative inquiry (individual interviews) tools.

3.2 Research site and participants

The targeted population of this study were teachers of English of a secondary school in Senegal. The secondary school in which I collected data is in Rufisque, an urban town located in the west region of Senegal not far from the capital city, Dakar. It is a big school which is well-built and well maintained although the buildings are rather old. The school has a computer room for students and a few computers for teachers in the staff room. Its creation dates back in colonial times. At that time, it was the only high school in Rufisque and its surroundings. Its students are from various socio-economic backgrounds. Many people from that area who are now respected professionals had once been students at this school. Due to its significantly interesting history, this school is believed to be a part of the national heritage. It has always had a good reputation thanks to its good results in the

national exams. Now, it has more students than it can actually contain and some classes take place outside its main site (see table 1 for more details).

Table 1. Characteristics of the school.

| Level | Number of students | | Students age | Number of teachers | Numbers of classes | Numbers of classrooms | Success rate (%) in the Bac exam 2016 | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| | 1,639 | | | | | | 51.48 ² | |
| Senior High School | Boys | Girls | 17-21 years | 84 | 36 | 27 | Boys | Girls |
| | 704 | 935 | | | | | 50.20 | 52.52 |

My choice of the school was guided by a senior pedagogical adviser, whom I work with, who gave me some information about the school and introduced me to the headteacher. As an in-service teacher trainer who works in Rufisque, I am free to visit secondary schools in the district without the need to seek special permission. The participants were purposively sampled (Palinkas et al., 2013) as I decided to work only with teachers of English. There are seven teachers of English in the school who were all interviewed but only five of them could be observed in class. The other two, one female and one man, had stopped teaching, because of the end of the school year, by the time they were interviewed. So, I only used the data from those five (see table 2). It is noteworthy that this study, with this ‘convenience sample’ (Floyd and Fuller, 2016), does not intend at all to be representative of teachers of English in Senegal.

² This success rate (51.48%) is very good compared to the national average of this year which is just 36.6%.

Table 2: The main characteristics of the participants

| No | Pseudonyms | Gender | Academic Qualification | Professional qualification | Teaching experience | Time at the school |
|----|------------|--------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Bilali | Male | M A | CAEM* | 16 years | 10 years |
| 2 | Lamro | Male | M A | CAEM | 20 years | 03 years |
| 3 | Maya | Female | M A | CAEM | 14 years | 11 years |
| 4 | Nura | Male | M A | CAES** | 07 years | 04 years |
| 5 | Yuga | Male | B A | CAEM | 29 years | 14 years |

*Teaching diploma for junior high school³

** Teaching diploma for senior high school

3.3 Descriptions of data collection instruments

In this study, I was aiming at generating data about participants’ views of teaching, the way they actually teach, their teaching experiences, their collaboration with their colleagues, their successes and failures in teaching and their reasons behind the latter, the school culture, their future job plans and so on. I chose three different main ways to gather data: individual interviews with teachers and the headteacher, classroom observations, and observation of and participation in a pedagogical cell meeting. The headteacher was specially asked about the goals and ethos of the school and what the administration does for their achievement. I also observed teachers outside the classrooms and in the staff room and took field notes around the school. The data collection instruments are as follows:

³ Although, there is a differentiation in the professional diplomas, teachers for junior high schools can teach in senior high schools. However, they cannot not take high leadership positions such as a headteacher or a deputy headteacher in those senior high schools.

3.3.1 Individual interviews

As argued by Hammersley (2015), interviewing is ‘a major source of data in qualitative inquiry’ (p.51) and it is one of the most used techniques used in qualitative research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006; Jacob and Furgerson, 2012). As the general purpose of interviewing was to find out people’s thoughts and feelings (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006) and to understand their experiences and what the latter mean to them (Seidman, 2006; Hollway and Jefferson, 2008), most questions were open-ended ones which Dörnyei (2003) defines as "a broad category that concerns attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values"(p.8). As such, I used prompts or questions and let the interviewees talk about their knowledge, their views and experiences about teaching, and whenever necessary, I asked questions for clarification.

In those interviews, I borrowed a questioning technique often used in ‘narrative inquiry’. Narrative inquiry, as a research methodological approach, is generally used within an interpretivist paradigm to explore people’s experiences (Clandinin and Rosiek, 2007). The relevance of resorting to its technique of questioning in this study, which explores identity from a sociocultural perspective, resides in the fact that it gives participants opportunities to select from their experiences and give what they want to show in relation to who they are. In fact, asking participants to talk about their past and listening to them without much interrupting is often used in ‘narrative inquiry’ (Floyd, 2012:224) as a way of questioning. As such, it is recognised that it can be very helpful in generating data about many aspects of people’s lives which are related to their identities (Floyd, 2012; Smit & Fritz, 2008).

Its use is all the more relevant to this study as teacher professional identity is seen as dynamic, context-based and interrelated with practice (Beijaard et al. 2000; Watson, 2006; Day et al., 2006). So asking teachers about their teaching experiences can uncover their views of teaching and learning and some aspects of their working contexts. Added to that,

due to the significance of subjectivity in identity, the participants' descriptions of their experiences may give some insights about who they think they are as teachers and how they enact their professional identity at school. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that one disadvantage of using this technique is that stories produced by participants about their lived experiences are just reconstructions (Josselson, 2011). In other words, participants only choose to talk about what they want to share with the audience, the researcher in the present case. But this does not undermine its value in research as it allows to see the meanings of experiences to participants (Floyd, 2012).

In order to get the data that I wanted to generate, I designed what Yates (2004) calls "initiating questions, probes and follow-up questions" (P.165) and put them on paper as a reminder to myself (see appendix G). I also asked teachers to position themselves within the definitions of teacher professional identity proposed by Beijaard (2000) (see appendix H) and to give their reasons for their choices. My main purpose in do so was to generate more talk about their views of professional identity.

The interview was semi-structured. First, it was piloted with a teacher of English from another school and few changes made to the questions. The main questions were sent to each teacher prior to the interview day. All the interviews were in English, which I did not see as a problem because all participants spoke English fluently. The interviews were also done at the school during working hours in a classroom, the staff room or in an office. They were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim later (see appendix J).

3.3.2 Classroom observation

The observations were done after the first interviews. My main purpose was to see teachers in class and to see whether there is any relationship between what teachers said in the interviews and what they were actually doing in their classrooms. As claimed by Yürekli (2013), classroom observations can yield significant 'insights about teachers' performance, characteristics, knowledge, and beliefs about language teaching' (p.302). To reduce what is known as 'observer effect' (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006), I told the teacher to introduce me as a teacher, not a researcher, who came to observe their classroom, a practice which is well-known to students.

I did not use an observation grid as each observation was rather considered a prolongation of the interview with the observed teacher. I took notes about the different activities and their instructions, the timing, the different types of interactions, the teacher's use of space with the help of a sketch of each classroom, and the frequency of his/her turns in taking the floor. I decided to be a participant-observer (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006), an observer who plays a recognised role in the group under study, as a teacher. That would allow me to be closer to the students and see how they were doing the different tasks given by teachers in all five classes but it was impossible in two of them. For the first lesson, the seating arrangement did not allow enough movement and for the second the lesson consisted of a presentation and a sketch by the students. For those two classes, I sat and took notes. After the observations, I summarised the main facts and ideas of each lesson in a special sheet designed for that purpose (see appendix I).

3.3.3 Participating in a pedagogical cell meeting

I participated in and observed one pedagogical meeting (see section 1.1.3) which was held at the staff room and lasted about two hours. All five teachers of this study attended the meeting. I took notes of the agenda of the meeting, the different steps followed, participants and the roles they played. I also tried to rate the level of participation of each teacher. Only one pedagogical cell meeting was held during the period of my data collection and the focus of the meeting was to choose three papers for the end of second semester English test.

3.4 Data analysis

First, audio recordings from the interviews were transcribed verbatim and printed. For the data analysis, I started with what Seidman (2006) calls ‘crafting profiles’. Here, a short profile is made for each teacher to have a snapshot of who they are, their views about teaching, their experiences and so on. After that, I used what is known as ‘thematic analysis’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Hammersley, 2015), which is considered “as a theoretically flexible method that organises, describes and interprets qualitative data” (Crowe et al., 2015:618). The thematic analysis done with this study is a deductive one as I always had in mind my research questions and what has been previously said in the literature. Therefore, I mainly looked for themes which were relevant for the study across the data set.

3.5 Ethical considerations

All the necessary measures were taken to abide by the ethical requirements of The Open University. First of all, I sought and got an ethical clearance from the university's Human Research Ethics Committee. Valid consents were sought both from the headteacher and from individual teachers. The headteacher was given a request letter and asked to return a signed consent form which were translated in French (see appendices A, B, C, D). Participants were fully informed about the project in two briefing meetings that I organised before starting any data collection. They had the right to ask for any information about the study and get an answer from me. I clearly told every teacher that participation was voluntary and it was written in the consent forms as well. All teachers of the school agreed to voluntarily participate in the study and were asked to read and sign a consent form (see appendix E). Here, it is worth mentioning that my position as an in-service teacher trainer in that district might have influenced the teachers' acceptance to participate in the study (see 6.2). I also committed to share with them the outcomes of my study through handouts and/or a presentation.

This research project did not involve collecting any sensitive information. Only essential information about participants was collected (see appendix F). Teachers were given an information sheet in which they put their name, academic and professional qualifications, teaching experiences and schools they have worked at. This study did not concern pupils—so no information about their identities was collected. Data are anonymised and stored electronically with adequate security measures by using protected passwords.

CHAPTER FOUR: COLLECTING AND ANALYSING THE DATA

This chapter starts with a short section which summarises the process of data collection. It then continues with a presentation of the data in five different profiles. The five profiles are followed by a short summary to capture the essential elements related to these teachers' professional identities. Finally, the school ethos and environment are presented through the headteacher's views.

4.1 Process of data collection

I started my fieldwork on May 12th, 2016 when I first met the headteacher and briefed him about the research project. I told him about my current position, the research project and its significance. He was very receptive and did not ask any particular questions about the research. After obtaining a permission from the headteacher to choose his school as a setting of the study, potential participants (teachers) were approached. Two teachers were briefed about the study individually and the other five in two groups. They were invited to voluntarily participate in the study and they all agreed. After that stage, all seven teachers were interviewed in accordance with their availability. Five were observed in class and interviewed again just after their lessons. The second interviews aimed at getting each teacher's impressions of their lessons and the rationales behind the ways they taught the observed lessons. Those five were retained for the data analysis. My last day in the field was June 13th on which I thanked all my participants and the school staff for their collaboration.

4.2 Participants' profiles

This section presents the data for the five participants of this study. To have a fuller picture of each participant, first a short background about the teacher made from my field notes is provided with very few observations related to their participation in the cell meeting. It is followed by a short narrative crafted from the interviews which focuses on their beginning as teachers, their views about teaching as a profession, how they implement those views and their future in relation to teaching. For profiling technique, I am much informed by Seidman (2006) in what he calls 'profile crafting'. As suggested by Seidman (2006), the profiles are 'presented in the words of the participant' (p.119) and when necessary editing has been done by deleting 'certain characteristics of oral speech' (p.121) such as repetitions, hesitations and so on. They are also punctuated in order to make them easier to read. The skipped passages are indicated with brackets filled in with three dots. When necessary, I have added few words but they are always in square brackets. Then, a short description of the observed lesson- of its main features- is given and how the teacher and students behaved during it. Here, it is worth noting that all lessons were entirely taught in English. When relevant, some of what they said in the short interviews after the lessons is integrated. I have put all this together so as to have a snapshot of the main aspects of the professional identity of each of them.

4.2.1 Bilali's profile

Bilali started teaching in 2000 and got his professional degree two years later. He has taught in three different schools all located in urban areas. For this year, he only teaches final year students. He also teaches English for Specific Purposes to medical doctors through courses sponsored by the state. When I talked to him about the research project he reacted very positively. He was very pleased that the research was being done at

their school and was the first to be interviewed. Bilali was very demanding during the cell meeting. Though he was not chairing the meeting, he insisted that they had to go through all test papers proposals thoroughly and make all necessary changes before printing them out.

His narrative is as follows:

At the time I had my BA and I realised that I could help, I could do something as a teacher and [...] I started. [...] I didn't have a training but anyway, I was crafted enough to be able to implement a certain number of things. I started as a part-time teacher [...] I said I am not going to look for anything else, just let me teach and see. [...] When I am at school I am happy, when I go back home I am happy and I like doing the job. [...] As I said at the beginning I had no training from ENS [teacher training school], I just had an experience from the teaching system because I had been a student for more than ten years at junior high, at senior high school and at the university. I knew a little bit about teaching and with my academic knowledge, I tried to do my best. But after training, after years of teaching, after gaining experience, I realised that I got to do something else, I moved into bringing new strategies, involving more the students. [...] I'm generous, I share much with people. I'm patient with my students. I'm like that; it's part of my nature, my personality but anyway I've realised if you want to make your teaching successful, you have to be patient, share, be open-minded because we are just coaches, students bring ideas or issues we didn't have or we didn't know about [...] Anyway, I am committed in all the activities in the school, I am the coordinator of the English club, and the coordinator of a group of master minds, you know I coach students most of the time. [...] I am creative and learner-centred. [...] In five years I would like to move to the BSI [British Senegalese Institute] to value my experience over there and as you see I will still be in the teaching system anyway.

Bilali taught a lesson with one of his final year classes (aged 19-21 years old). The lesson was due to start at eight o'clock but due to an electricity problem it started about half an hour later. In his lesson, he used a video projector and his own laptop and loudspeakers. The lesson was done with many activities ranging from a brainstorming about the topic, domestic violence, through gap-filling with listening to a discussion towards the end of the lesson. The students were very active all the way through the lesson, which showed their interest in the topic. Some girls were passionately talking about that social issue in quite good English (in relation to what is expected at their level). This could be seen in their talks in the groups and when they contributed to whole classroom discussions. The lesson lasted about an hour and a half and students were given homework to write a letter to an authority of their choice to draw their attention on the issue of domestic violence. Bilali was very flexible in his way of dealing with students. In that particular lesson, he gave students enough time to speak and listened to them very carefully. He was very enthusiastic during the whole lesson. The way he delivered the lesson was very much in line with his views about teaching. Reacting to the high participation of learners in his lesson he said: *'you don't talk out of a vacuum when you talk, it must be first interesting to you.... you should have a reason to speak that's why I prefer to have topics like that where everybody ...has the eagerness to say something'*.

Bilali sees himself as being committed, creative, generous, open-minded and patient. His professional identity can be seen as a mixture of personal characteristics and things learned by experience. He sees teaching English as helping learners to acquire knowledge and learn communicative skills. He values collaboration with other people, particularly colleagues. That view is also extended to learners who, he thinks, can be valuable sources of knowledge to the teacher and to their peers.

4.2.2 Lamro's profile

Lamro had an initial training before he started teaching twenty years ago. So far, he has taught at three different schools located in both rural and urban settings. He is the coordinator of the English pedagogical cell, which requires him to undertake extra work with his meetings both with teachers and the school administration. He also has to report to both parties. He is the first teacher I met when I went to the school. He very much welcomed the project and agreed to participate in it right at the beginning, just after my first meeting with him. He gave me the other teachers' phone numbers and assured me of his availability to help me all the way through my field work, which he did very well. He chaired the cell meeting and brought two test proposals which were approved by his colleagues at the end of the meeting.

Here is Lamro's narrative:

When I was at university, I was sort of becoming either a translator or a teacher and since it was not possible to follow the training of a translator so I sat for the contest of ENS [Teacher training school] and then I succeeded, and then became a teacher. [...]

When I started I did not have big problems because I found there experienced teachers who guided me. [...] I would define teaching as a school of life [...] you interact with people, you teach people but while teaching you are all the time learning. [...] I would call it [teaching] organising learning because students, generally, have background knowledge in every field [...] the role of a teacher is to elicit or just make people discover what they know about the topic so a teacher is just a kind of elicitor if I can put it like that [...] I use pair work, I use group work, to let the strong students help the weak ones because students can learn a lot by doing group work or pair work. For example, students who are shy can be supported, can be helped by the strong ones [...]. Generally, I can say that my teaching is learner-centred because as a teacher I don't need to speak a lot in front of students, it's

students who need practice. I do my best to make them use the language either in a written way or in an oral one. [...] I think a teacher should be modest and flexible because if you consider yourself as being a kind of expert who knows everything, you're in the wrong way. You should be modest, even accept your students, sometimes, to teach you something [...]. I think that participating in the cell is something positive. Fortunately, I have done it for twenty years now. [...] For the time being let me continue with my teaching but if I see an opportunity like a contest or something else why not...?

His lesson was with a lower sixth form class (lowest level of senior high school: 16-17 years old). He started his lesson with a brainstorming about music and particularly musicians from South Africa where the concerned singer is from. This allowed students to talk about the types of music they knew and about some celebrities in that domain. The lesson was based on listening a song about love and marriage. There was a diversity of activities about listening, reading, and speaking. The activities were mainly listening and answering questions, filling in gaps, reading the transcripts and answering questions, and giving opinions. He gave clear instructions to students and enough time to do the activities. He asked students to work in groups but he did not move a lot around the classroom to see what the students were doing. As a participant observant, in my teacher role, I realised that many students had an acceptable level of English but needed help to carry out the tasks. The class was lively; students enjoyed listening to the music and giving their opinions about marriage. He had applied much of what he said about teaching, for example involving students in the whole lesson by giving them the floor as much as possible. After the lesson, he expressed his satisfaction: *'they [students] listened, ... they filled in the missing words and I gave them the opportunity to express themselves, I think that my objectives were met'*. He even expressed the possibility of teaching the same lesson in another class.

Lamro is an articulately spoken man who sees himself as a teacher who organises learning. He sees teaching as a two-way process. Although he sees himself as an ‘elicitor’, he does not see the teacher as being the unique source of knowledge. For him, learners can be good contributors to the teaching/learning process and he expects them to help one another in group work. He also values working with other colleagues.

4.2.3 Maya’s profile.

Maya started teaching without initial training in 2002 and did her professional training six years later. She has taught in three different secondary schools all in urban areas. She has an approachable and welcoming manner. She almost always speaks with a smile on her face. She helped me a lot on many occasions, for example in finding where a classroom was located in the school, introducing me to teachers of other subjects and so on. During the cell meeting, she did not show much involvement though she made few comments from time to time.

Her narrative is as follows:

I did not really want to become a teacher because I used to say teachers are not well paid so I am trying to see something else but fortunately my husband who was teaching at that time spent all his time talking about teaching as a good profession. Then since I did not have anything to do just to stay at home and cooking, I tried to get in [...] I did not receive a training before starting teaching. It was really difficult but, fortunately, some colleagues of mine helped me a lot [...] my chance was that I lived together with one of my colleagues [...]. I wanted to improve myself, [...] I was always afraid of making mistakes [...] [a pedagogical cell] is very interesting because in the pedagogical cells we have to share and a teacher who doesn’t share won’t improve himself, he cannot be a good

teacher. Sharing is very important as far as teaching is concerned [...]. My objective is to prepare my students for the exam [...]. The most important things for me is to prepare our students for exams because they are here for that [....]. For me teaching is a profession which consists of guiding learners [...]. When I was in Kiffar one of my students used to come at nine. So my problem was how to make that student [a girl] come on time [School starts at eight o'clock]. I started making some research and I found that she had a husband and had two kids and I decided... to do my best for that to girl to succeed. Fortunately, now she is a teacher at elementary school. [...] if I have something else I will change because I'm tired of teaching, it's not easy to teach, it is really difficult!

Her lesson consisted of a presentation about terrorism done by a group of students. They wrote the outline on the board and read different passages of their presentation in turns. The reading was followed by a questions and answers session between presenters and their classmates. The topic seemed to be of interest to the students as they reacted very well. After their presentation, the same group performed a sketch on the topic. The focus was on raising young people's awareness of terrorism. They also invited their classmates to play their roles in helping other people to know more about this issue and think about ways of fighting against it. The lesson was a real occasion for students to practise the target language as they spoke English all the way through it. After the sketch, Maya said few words to congratulate the group on their work. For her, *'students must do research even if they don't have an exposé they must do research to improve themselves, they must do research for their own interest because the research they do is not for me it's for them'*. She thinks that in making students do research, she is promoting learner-centredness and learner autonomy.

Maya is a teacher who sees herself as a guide. She considers that teaching is helping students to succeed in their lives by mainly preparing them for the exams and giving them good advice. She said that she often focuses on making students familiarise themselves with the exam paper format and master the different tasks that are often given to them. She is very keen on teaching the prescribed things and gives a high importance to collaboration with her colleagues.

4.2.4 Nura's profile

Nura is the teacher with the shortest teaching experience (seven years) of the group. He is at his second school and the first was also located in an urban area. He completed his professional training last year. At the beginning, he did not show much interest in participating in the research project and asked some questions like '*what is this research for?*'. After that, I gave more explanations and I assured all teachers that the project did not have any evaluation purpose at all. He finally agreed to take part in it. He was much involved in the cell meeting. At the end, he volunteered to edit the test paper proposals in accordance with his colleagues' suggestions and print out the final versions.

Nura's narrative is the following:

After graduating at the university, most of the time, you are going to seek a job in order to get something that's the reason why you are not choosing only one special domain. You're just sending applications to here and there and..the first opportunity that comes is the one you are going to grab. [...] I could say this is what brought me into this field of teaching. [...] [when]you first start teaching, you are not well-paid and you know life is very difficult [...] I see teaching as a way of developing competences or skills that are useful in society and in doing so, we should not only focus on the language. A language is

a means of communication, we're teaching through English, we are not teaching only English. We should first teach the language because it is the means that is going to convey the message so that students may have a good grasp of it [...]. Most of the time, not all the time, I gather students. It can be pair work, most of the time group work, from 4 to 6 students something like this. [...] As a teacher, I would say that I am considering myself as a reference, a model in a way [...]. I want students to know who they are, to make them believe that they have some potentials that they should exploit in order to be someone great in the future [...] [as far as the schools I have worked at are concerned] I can say that my second school[his current school] is the one in which I have been integrated the most because, here, people they consider themselves a family specially in the cell, which means that it makes the collaboration easier [...] I am still a student at the university and I am still doing some research. I registered last year in my first year of PhD and I am furthering my research maybe it can give some kind of promotion in the future but anyway only God knows.

His lesson was a reading comprehension lesson about tips and attitudes to succeed in life. He started with a brainstorming about the topic. He then put students in groups and asked them to work together. The instructions were just said but not written on the board. They did not seem to be clear enough for many students. I could notice that as I went from group to group to see how they were working. The class was not lively at all. Students were together but they did not know exactly what to do. They rarely spoke and hardly used English when they talked. It seemed that the tasks were above their level or not clear at all. Though he gave them enough time, students did not do much work. When he started correcting the tasks, there were very few students who took the floor. Almost each question was answered by the teacher himself, which made the lesson look more like a lecture. He was insisting on behaviours that students needed to adapt if they wanted to succeed (e.g: being ambitious, hardworking, regular and punctual at school). So, his message-conveying

view of teaching was really visible in that lesson. He was using English to teach a content. This was very evident in his lesson which was rather a lecture to students. Actually, he took the floor much more than the students did. The students were just listening to him, which made the lesson look very boring. No enthusiasm could be seen on the students' faces; they did not show any willingness to speak. Nura even recognised this problem in his short interview after the lesson as he said that *'we most of the time meet problems, the problem is the students, they feel all the time scared to express themselves'*. However, this was not the case with other teachers' classes.

Nura sees himself as a 'role model' and views teaching as conveying messages, which is very consistent with the way he taught his lesson. He does not see teaching English as just helping students to be able to communicate in it but rather as conveying messages in English. He is very committed to his supervision of the English club⁴ of the school. On many occasions, I saw him working with students during lunch break (12h-3hpm) to prepare them for a performance in English.

4.2.5 Yuga's profile

Yuga is the teacher who has the longest teaching experience among the group; twenty-nine years spent in four different secondary schools all located in the surroundings of Rufisque. Although he is in his fifties, he is still very active. I could see that he was almost always using one of the computers in the staff room when he was not teaching. He told me that he spent most of his free time surfing the internet looking for teaching materials. He did not want to be a teacher when he entered the profession but he said that he had done all his best during his career to deliver what he sees as good teaching. In the

⁴ A club is a subject-based organisation voluntarily run by students under the supervision of a teacher who teaches that subject. Its activities, aimed at improving students' level, are done outside the normal working hours of the school.

cell meeting, he just took the floor a couple of times and gave his approval for the others to choose the appropriate tests.

Here is his narrative:

As a student I was compelled to try to make both ends meet because I did not have any scholarship from the government and my father really did not have all those means to support my studies. As a second year student, I started teaching in a private school in Rufisque, here. [..]I did this for about ten years, something like this because, to be frank, I did not have teaching as my goal, I did not want to do teaching as a profession but finally I got trapped and I was obliged to stay in teaching. [...] I believe that teaching is giving knowledge and, to my point, it is giving knowledge with a lot of generosity and communion also with the students because, students, I believe that they are our sons because we're kind of spiritual fathers to the students. [...]. Why I like putting students together? [I like putting students in groups] because a group essentially has some who are good, some of them are not good and [there is] a kind of complementarity [...] I believe that I am open-minded and I can accept anybody, whatever the case and my number one creed is be good to others and I believe that when I strive to be good to others, as a teacher, I will do everything possible in order to give this knowledge to those who need it. [...] Well, I have been trying to do something else. I've been doing this thing for so many years now and this is it.

His lesson was mainly about grammar. The students were learning about English rather than how to use it. The communicative aspect of language teaching was missing. The lesson was entirely about different prepositions of the English language and their various usages. The lesson presented a lot of information and the students were given handouts about many of prepositions. The students participated in the lessons very well in answering questions but most talk was done by Yuga when he was giving explanations. Activities

were mainly about filling in gaps with prepositions and making sentences with them.

During the lesson, he asked students to work in groups but the classroom setting was not appropriate for that. Students were sitting on two rows of long desks comparable to pews.

There was only one big alley in the middle of the room. The class was full and moving was very difficult. Yuga was most of the time in front. He used a video projector to show a cartoon made on prepositions.

Yuga sees teaching as giving knowledge with ‘communion with students’. He goes further by considering himself a ‘spiritual father’ to students. He advocates that he often uses ICT in his lessons and bases most of them on resources taken from the internet: *‘most of the time I try....to go to the internet as my main resource’*. Despite that fact, he can be seen as belonging to the rather old school which sees teaching as transmitting knowledge.

4.3 A short synthesis of the teachers’ profiles

This section synthesises the main elements related of teacher professional identity which are noticeable in these profiles. In fact, a closer look at the teachers’ profiles above made from the data set can allow to see that these teachers have different reasons for entering and remaining in the teaching profession, have different views of themselves as teachers and of teaching itself, consider learners in different ways, value making students work together and collaboration with colleagues.

Only one teacher (Bilali) really wanted to become a teacher: *I got into it because, for me, it was a vocation and I would like to teach’*. Yuga, chose to remain a teacher because he was obliged to work to gain money: *I was obliged to go and follow a training and enter civil service in order to have a kind of protection, what we call a social protection for my*

family. As for Lamro, Maya and Nura, they all decided to be teachers because they did not have other choices (see their narratives).

Bilali is also the only teacher who said clearly that he would like to continue teaching in five years' time. However, Bilali would like to go to the BSI which is a prestigious semi-private institution with better teaching facilities. Bilali has chosen teaching as a vocation and much of how he sees himself as a professional such as being creative, patient, flexible, and his generosity in bringing his own equipment at school may be related to that choice. Maya seems to be put off by the low academic level of students and their engagement in class: *the level of the students, now the teacher does everything, teachers do everything in class [...] they hardly succeed*. However, this was not the case in her own lesson in which students had shown a good involvement. Yuga's partial dissatisfaction is mostly due to the bad opinion of people about teachers. Lamro and Nura did not say exactly what they want to become in the future neither did they affirm their wish to remain teachers.

Two elements are common to all five teachers. Firstly, they all have a rather holistic view of teaching. None saw teaching English as just helping students to master the language and use it communicatively. For them teaching encompasses many more things such as giving advice, helping students to succeed in exams, conveying messages and so on. For example, Maya did her best to help a young married girl to succeed: *I kept on talking about the importance of learning ...and I helped her a lot also giving her some extra work*.

Obviously her objective was not just to help her with her English but to help her succeed in her life. The second element is about the way they organise their teaching/learning process. They all claim to value making students work together, which they tried to implement in their lessons. With these teachers, making students to work in pairs or in groups seems to be a sign of, applying, and maybe, an adhesion to, a learner-centred approach.

However, teachers have some differences in the way they perceive themselves as professionals in their relationships with learners. While Bilali and Lamro see learners as possible good sources of knowledge in terms of their contributions to lessons, Nura and Yuga see themselves as the ones who should be giving knowledge to students. Bilali's and Lamro's lessons were taught with much involvement of the students. Contrary to that, Nura's and Yuga's lessons were characterised by most of the talking being done by the teacher, which is very close to a teacher-centred approach of teaching. Maya is rather different to all the other teachers as she explicitly advocates a focus on preparing her students to succeed in their exams. Though Maya might have helped in the preparation, her lesson was entirely done by students, which could be seen as a way of preparing them for the oral part of the exam. All this shows that there is some diversity in the ways these teachers perceive their professional identities and the different roles they should play as teachers.

These teachers have claimed to give much importance to collaboration with other teachers of English. They see the English pedagogical cells as valuable opportunities to increase their knowledge and learn new skills so as to improve their teaching practice. As acknowledged by Nura, the school environment is conducive to that collaboration between teachers. For Maya also *'collaboration is the best thing for a teacher'*. The same view is also held by the headteacher (see 4.4 below). However, this valued collaboration seems not to have been effective at the school this year, at least not through their pedagogical cell. As noted by Bilali: *The pedagogical cell is not really functioning, we don't, we don't meet very often*. In the same vein, Nura stated that *'people .. are too busy, they don't have time to hold meetings here, we rarely meet'*. Instead of being among the group, collaboration seems to be happening between two of them: Lamro and Yuga. Lamro said that *'for example, 'Yuga' whenever he has something interesting or a lesson plan he comes to me and say 'Lamro' you can try this in your class I did it and it was successful'*.

4.4 The school's ethos

The ethos of the school was introduced by the headteacher. In his capacity, he is the first one responsible for making sure that educational policies are correctly implemented at the school in relation to the community's expectations and government regulations. As the principal authority of the school, his adhesion to the ethos of the school and commitment to maintain it is very important. He seems to have a clear understanding of the ethos of the school. He has in mind the good reputation that the school has had for many years which has become inherently part of its identity. Though he does not see the current state of the school as perfect, he advocates that '*we are moving towards excellence*'. He continues by saying that, to achieve such an objective, much work needs to be done. He believes that '*for excellence you need to set criteria or values [...]. We need to have a strong sense of responsibility. A teacher who has a strong sense of responsibility will come on time, [will have] punctuality and a strong sense of quality work.*' The same thing is required from students as '*they need to be assiduous, hard-working and disciplined*'. The school administration has also a big role to play for that to happen.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETING THE DATA

5.1 Diversity between participants

As shown in the teachers' profiles in the previous chapter, there is a great diversity in the ways teachers see themselves. Participants have shown different perceptions of their professional identities. They have distinctive characteristics and seem to have rather varied preoccupations in relation to their work. For example, in terms of their views about being a teacher, while Lamro sees himself as an elicitor (someone who makes students learn actively in various ways) Yuga considers himself a knowledge provider (someone who gives knowledge to students). Nura insists on being a role model to students and has a big interest in increasing his knowledge through research and furthering his studies while he is still teaching. Maya, the only female teacher in this study, though she does not enjoy teaching very much, has shown a particular preoccupation with the success of young girls. Bilali claims to be innovative and keen on using new technologies in his teaching, which, for him, is the reason why he wants to move to a more equipped institution. However, this can also be seen as a self-development project.

This diversity was also very visible in the ways they taught their lessons particularly in their interactions with learners. If put on a continuum from being teacher-centred to learner-centred, Nura's lesson could be placed near to one extremity (teacher-centred), Bilali's one next to the other extremity (learner-centred) and the lessons of the other teachers would be somewhere in between. However, no lesson was completely teacher/learner-centred. Worthwhile noting is the fact that all topics were taken from the national syllabus but lessons were entirely planned by the teachers who brought their own resources. This can be seen as something very positive because it shows a certain freedom of the teachers in choosing appropriate resources and not just blindly following textbooks. What might be a concern in relation to this diversity is that the learner-centred

approach, which is recommended by the Senegalese educational authorities, has yet to be genuinely applied in classrooms.

In spite of working in the same school, these teachers have various views of their job and different ways of doing it. All this shows the significance, though it may be complex, of studying how people understand teaching and the variety of elements that may be related to the enactment of teacher professional identity.

5.2 Influence of societal views on teacher professional identity

From a sociocultural perspective, individuals and the society to which they belong are constantly in interrelationship (Penuel and Wertsch, 1995; Lasky, 2005; Watson, 2006). In this respect, neither can be considered as a separate entity. In other words, society shapes individuals because identity 'is inflected by what is legitimated by others in any social context' (Miller, 2009:173) but society is, at the same time, shaped by the contributions of the different individuals that constitute it. What has been seen with the present study's participants very much resonates with that sociocultural view of identity. In fact, despite the existence of a certain diversity between them, there is, mostly, a great convergence of their views about their understanding of the role of teachers. In defining themselves in terms like 'role model', 'spiritual father', 'elicitor', 'advice givers' and 'guide', they see themselves in mostly similar ways as the society they belong to. For instance, Nura thinks that *we should go further teaching useful knowledge for students, whenever they integrate the society that they be good citizens... we should go further not limiting ourselves on the subject matter but deeper talking about social issues, moral issues and so on.*

The same can be noticed with Bilali: *'I spend two or three minutes explaining certain things, situations, giving them advice vis a vis to life, what we expect from them, how they should behave, and so and so forth; preparing them'*.

Like Bilali, Maya also sees giving advice a part and parcel of teaching specially to young girls. She proudly said: *'I keep on giving advice to my students specially to the girls'*.

It can be said that these views are in line with views about the identity of a teacher widely shared in the Senegalese society. Generally, teaching is seen in a holistic way in Senegal (Les Assises de l'Education du Senegal, 2014). In other words, teaching is preparing learners to be able to fully participate in the development of their country, which is only possible if they have the required knowledge and skills, and to have a good understanding of social life so as to allow them to work and live in different places of world (Thiam, 2013). In sum, these teachers see the teaching/learning process as a preparation for life. Therefore, teaching English is not just helping students to speak the language but it encompasses many more other things such as teaching students mutual respect, which, for example, Bilali did in his lesson when dealing with domestic violence.

Actually, these Senegalese teachers' views about their professional identity, seen through the different roles that they think they should play, seem to be influenced by the larger society's views about teaching. The commitment that I have noticed with teachers may also be linked to the fact that teachers are civil servants in Senegal and teaching is seen by many as what Welmond (2002) calls a 'sacerdoce' [priesthood] (p.53). In this respect, teachers, like all other civils servants, are expected to be very dedicated to their work. Even at the level of classroom practice, there is still a strong influence of the society. As I said in the first chapter, teaching has been seen in Senegal for a long time as a transmission of knowledge. So, it was not very surprising that Yuga sees himself as a knowledge provider, which means that there is still some misunderstanding of or resistance to a learner-centred

approach which has been being promoted for some years now. This also may imply that much work needs to be done to convince both teachers and the society of the appropriateness of the new approach.

Even the fact that most of these teachers became teachers just because they did not have other choices can be seen as related to the society's views of teachers. In fact, this seems to be very telling about the impact that the negative opinion about teachers of the general public, often conveyed through the press, is having on those who are looking for jobs. The reality is that, recently, there have been many teachers' strikes and a worsening of results in the national exams in many places (Les Assises de l'Education du Senegal, 2014). This has, to some extent, damaged the image of teachers who are now accused of just caring for money, not for students' success anymore. Due to the deterioration of the image of the teaching profession in Senegal, which was already present in nineties (Sylla, 1992), it is understandable that most of these studied teachers wanted and still want to do other jobs.

5.3 The influence of the school culture on teacher professional identity

The working context has been seen as having a great impact on the formation of professional identity by many studies (Day et al., 2006; Smit and Fritz, 2008; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Cross & Ndofirepi, 2015; Barrett, 2016). In the present study, the school culture might be influential in the ways the participants see themselves as teachers because it is the place where they enact their professional identities. That influence is possible because teacher practice and teacher professional identity are in constant interrelation (Smit and Fritz, 2008; Day et al., 2006). If I take the example of Nura who is very committed to the supervision of the English Club, this may be due to the support from the administration as stated by the headteacher: *'the administration supports in events, printing*

and everything; we have been doing this and we have no regrets.' His commitment may also be related to the fact that he is more at ease in working with his colleagues in this current school *'I feel more comfortable here than in the first one'*. However, Nura's comfort also may be explained by the fact that he got his professional degree last year while he was teaching at the school. Talking about that degree, he said that *'whenever you get it you feel comfortable... more committed. This qualification is very important'*. The school's facilities and his new colleagues may have contributed to his success. To some extent, this new qualification which brings both a better status (from contractual to civil servant) and a higher salary coupled with a better perceived school may bring more motivation to him.

The good environment of the school, can also be very motivating to teachers. For the headteacher:

We consider ourselves a family in this high school and these teachers have instilled it in students that's why we have very good relationships here, even myself who is the headteacher, I am always in the playground teasing students. Yes, of course there is rigour but there is also open-mindedness'.

During my field work, I could see the headteacher coming and staying at the staff room talking to teachers, which is not very frequent in many schools I have been at. I could also see that a good number of teachers of different subjects would spend their three-hour break in the school, have lunch and tea together. Teachers were asking about one another's families, talking about their work, talking about politics with laughter, and so on. A sense of collegiality was very visible in the school. The commitment of teachers may be due to the fact that the school promotes a culture of excellence, which mainly means, here, achieving good results in national exams. The good reputation of the school, which is well-known within the community, seems to be taken account of by teachers. Though most of

these teachers want to do something else, they are committed to do their best as regards to their job as long as they work at the school.

Another significant aspect related to the leadership of the school was mentioned by Maya. Talking about the management of the school she said: *'we are lucky to have a good headmaster here.... there are some teachers if you let them do whatever they want they will never be in class on time...if we want to develop we need a tough leader'*. What I could notice is that teachers with whom I worked always came before time. No doubt that the rigour of school leaders may be very significant in making some teachers work harder but the collegiality mentioned by the headteacher also can play a determinant role in motivating teachers without threatening them.

5.4 Individual factors influencing teacher professional identity

As I previously said, only one teacher (Bilali) among the five wanted to become a teacher and would like to remain a teacher in the future. Both Bilali and Maya seem to have been influenced by their immediate social environment in their choices of becoming teachers. Bilali says that *'in my house, almost all my brothers are teachers'* and Maya talked about her becoming a teacher implicitly because of the influence of her husband who was a teacher. However, the big difference between the two is that Bilali clearly said that he chose teaching as a vocation while Maya only became a teacher because she did not have another choice. The other three teachers did not mention any influence related to their choices at all and mostly became teachers because they needed to be employed but not because they really wanted to be teachers. For example, Yuga chose to be a teacher because of his family responsibilities: *I got trapped and I was obliged to stay in*

teaching...I was obliged to go and follow a training and enter civil service in order to have a kind of.... protection, what we call a social protection for my family.

However, on top of choosing teaching by obligation, Yuga also has a very ambivalent position about being a teacher.

It's a blessing in a sense because I like teaching, giving knowledge is something I like very much but as far as my social development, and my family, in this country, is concerned, I see it as a curse because ...teachers are not seen in the right way, or the good way, as we have already said, this is a problem, and if I can say it nowadays, I am a bit disappointed.

Even after having taught for about three decades, he just has a partial satisfaction with his job. He likes the job but he is not happy with the way teachers are treated by the general public.

It seems that the personal factor which consists in choosing teaching as a vocation has a significant impact of professional identity. In fact, Bilali has claimed qualities such as commitment, generosity, patience, open-mindedness which are very desirable for good teaching. These aspects of his professional identity can be very much linked to his choosing teaching as his ideal job. His motivation, commitment and generosity may also be rooted in the love he has for his job. This is aligned with Cross' and Ndofirepi's (2015) position when they point out that personal elements of an individual may have a great influence on his or her professional identity as a teacher.

5.5 National education policy, teacher professional identity and practice

As I said in the first chapter, the Senegalese educational authorities have been trying to promote a learner-centred approach for some years now. As such, many of the in-service teaching training activities revolve around ways of implementing that approach.

As shown previously in the profiles, teachers have various views about teaching. However, in terms of teaching approach, they all claim, in one way or the other, that they teach in accordance with the learner-centred approach through their pair work or group work strategies. This can be seen as teachers trying to comply with the national move towards this approach of teaching. Change seems to be taking place, at least with some of them. Nonetheless, making students to work together cannot be seen as a sign of a good implementation of a learner-centred approach unless the rationale behind is well-understood by both teachers and learners.

Interestingly, not all lessons were taught in a learner-centred way. Nura and Yuga who rather see themselves as knowledge providers taught their lessons in an almost teacher-centred manner because they did most of the talking themselves at the expense of learners. On the contrary, the other teachers who have a more democratic view of teaching tried to involve their students. For instance, Bilali believes *if you involve students through the teaching learning process giving them opportunities to speak, they can even surprise you sometimes, you see pupils talk a lot*. This was visible in the lesson I observed. So, it was possible to see a certain correlation between their views about who they are and their ways of teaching.

This tentative finding mirrors what has previously been advocated in the literature between teacher professional identity and practice (Beijaard et al., 2000; Watson, 2006). This relationship shows the significance of taking account of teacher professional identity in pre-service and in-service teacher education and training. In fact, in a context of change

towards learner-centredness, teachers seeing themselves as knowledge providers can be problematic in that such perceptions of teacher identity do not promote a democratisation of the teaching/learning process.

This situation of change might bring to the surface the problem of ‘identity dissonance’ (Pillen et al., 2013:86) which happens when teachers go through different tensions in trying to do their job. Those tensions may be related to both personal and contextual factors. The societal views of teaching can also be a hindrance to teachers’ willingness to change their professional identity. They might wish to preserve a ‘knowledge provider’ identity that the society ascribes to them and, consequently, involve learners less in the teaching-learning process.

Technically, there might also be some other difficulties. Teachers may want to use teaching equipment that are not available at the school. This is the case with Bilali: *what I would like to have is an available screen for me or for the cell and available material but most of the time we don’t have those material and it hinders.. the teaching process.. it’s not good anyway.*

All these show the importance of understanding the formation of teacher professional identity in relation to teachers’ working context, both at central and local levels, and how it interacts with teachers’ practice. So, it can be said that any attempt to introduce a new teaching/learning approach will require much more than just declarations but efforts to change views, beliefs, and attitudes and provide necessary means.

CHAPTER SIX: MAIN FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LESSONS, AND RESEARCH THEMES

This chapter deals with a summary of the main findings of this small scale study, its limitations, implications, some of the lessons I have learnt through this experience, and possible research themes to follow it up.

6.1 Main findings

After analysing the data, this exploratory study has yielded a number of insights about teacher professional identity and particularly in relation to the studied group. It is noteworthy to say that what has been said about these teachers are only partial insights into their teacher professional identities. Though they should be seen as tentative, the main findings of this present study can be summarised as follows:

- Some of the studied teachers' views of their professional identities are consistent with the dominant views of what it means to be a teacher in Senegalese society.
- The school environment plays a significant role in the ways these teachers see themselves as professionals and in how they enact their teacher identities.
- Some of the teachers' views of who they are as professionals are closely aligned with the ways they taught their observed lessons.
- The learned-centred approach that all teachers claimed to apply has not been fully implemented in the observed lessons. Thus, there was a gap between claims and classroom practice.

6.2 Limitations

As all human work and as this study is done by someone who is at his very first stage of doing research, it has some limitations, among which I would like to mention these:

- **Small sampling:** The sample of this study can be seen as relatively very small. However, as I said in chapter three, this study does not claim to be representative of the teachers of English of the district of Rufisque, let alone those of the whole country. One possibility would be to study teachers in many different schools to have data from a variety of school cultures and their possible impacts on teacher professional identity.
- **Short time:** Due to the complexity of identity itself, an in-depth exploration over an extended period of time might have given more insights about the professional identities of the studied teachers. This would allow to spend more time in the school, have more interview rounds, more classroom observations, and so on.
- **The reflexivity of the researcher:** Obviously, the fact that I am a Senegalese and an in-service teacher trainer as well might have influenced much of the way I undertook this study and the ideas I developed in it. The fact that I work at the regional teacher training centre which covers the studied teachers' school also might have influenced their agreement to participate in the study and affected their different replies during the interviews and how they taught their lessons as well.

6.3 Implications

Based on the tentative findings of this small scale study and my knowledge of the context, the following can be seen as implications for better practice in in-service teacher training in Senegal and other similar contexts.

- The various matters that teachers may encounter in their practice need to be discussed in in-service teacher training activities. To put this in practice, teacher trainers should have less hierarchical relationships with teachers. This would allow constructive discussions between participants during training sessions instead of teacher trainers trying to impose certain views of teaching, which may be the case on many occasions. However, this would also require teachers to be ready to talk about both their successes and failures and take more responsibility for their professional development but not just expecting everything from teacher trainers.
- Much more involvement in pedagogical cells' activities should be encouraged and rewarded. In fact, participation in such activities of the 'community of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) of teachers can foster their learning and, consequently, impact positively on their practice. For that to happen, those activities should be directly relevant to the context where teachers work.
- The educational authorities should always take account of the significant role that the school plays in the formation of teacher professional identity and their practice (Miller, 2009). In this respect, it can be said that introducing educational changes not only requires educating/training teachers but it also encompasses having an enabling teaching environment which allows teachers to enact new professional identities which these changes may require them to adapt.

6.4 Lessons

As my first qualitative research study, I have learnt a number of lessons among which the following can be mentioned:

- **The iterative characteristic of qualitative research:** The process of doing qualitative research is not straightforward. In fact, this study has involved moving back and forth many times at different stages. Through this experiences, I have gained more understanding about the fact that social science research is not a linear process. It can be more complex and unpredictable than it may look at the beginning of a project.
- **Interviewing:** Interviewing is not as simple as it looks. It requires a lot of preparation and skills. Sometimes it requires much adjusting because each interviewee is unique and questions might not be understood as intended by the researcher. I think that I could have asked teachers to expand on some aspects of their responses to avoid the drying up that I noticed.
- **Transcription:** Transcribing interviews requires a much time and energy. It is worth thinking about it well before the data collection. It may be a good idea to start it as early as possible and not just wait until all the interviews are done.
- **Data Analysis:** Qualitative data analysis requires a lot of time and patience. This was the most difficult part of the research as what I was looking for in the data was not always easy to see nor was it, sometimes, as evident as I wanted it to be. This also might be linked to my being inexperienced in the field of research.

- **Field notes:** I could have taken more notes about what the teachers actually said during the cell meeting and some of what students said as well.

6.5 Research themes

It would be interesting to follow up this small scale study with research projects that would explore:

- The main identity tensions (Piller et al, 2013) that Senegalese teachers have been confronted with in the process of trying to apply a learner-centred approach.
- The relationship between prior learning experiences and the formation of teacher professional identity in Senegal.
- The extent to which participation in a ‘community of practice’ (Lave and Wenger, 1991) can impact on the formation of teacher professional identity and practice.
Here the pedagogical cell can be seen as an activity of a wider community of practice constituted by Senegalese teachers of English.
- Subject matter and teacher professional identity with teachers of English in Senegal. In which ways does the use of the English language participate in the formation of the professional identities of teachers of English?

REFERENCES

- Abednia, A. (2012) 'Teachers' professional identity: Contributions of a critical EFL teacher education course in Iran', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 28, pp. 706-717.
- Beijaard, D., Verloop, N. and Vermunt, J. D. (2000) 'Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: an exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 16, pp. 749-764.
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P.C. and Verloop, N. (2004) 'Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 20, pp. 107-128.
- Beauchamp, C. & Thomas, L. (2009) 'Understanding teacher identity: an overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education', *Cambridge Journal of Education*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 175-189.
- Braun, v. & Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 77-101.
- Burns, A. and Richards J.C. (2009) 'Introduction' in A. Burns, and J.C. Richards (ed.) *The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Coldron, J., & Smith, R. (1999) 'Active location in teachers' construction of their professional identities', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, vol. 31, no. 6, pp. 711-726.
- Coleman, H. (2013) *The English Language in Francophone Africa*. Dakar, the British Council.
- Clandinin, D. J. and Rosiek, J. (2007) 'Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: borderland spaces and tensions' in D.J. Clandinin (ed.) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*, available online at : <http://methods.sagepub.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/base/download/BookChapter/handbook-of-narrative-inquiry/n2.xml>, (Accessed on 23/10/16).

- Cross, M. Ndofirepi, E. (2015) 'On becoming and remaining a teacher: rethinking strategies for developing teacher professional identity in South Africa', *Research Paper in Education*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 95-113.
- Crowe, M., Inder, M. & Porter, R. (2015) 'Conducting qualitative research in mental health: Thematic and Content analyses', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, vol. 49, no. 7, pp. 616-623.
- Day, C., Kington, A., Stobart, G. and Sammons, P. (2006) 'The Personal and professional selves of teachers: stable and unstable identities', *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 601-616.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003) *Questionnaires in Second Language Research. Construction, Administration, and Processing*, Mahwah, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Erling, Elizabeth (2015) *The Relationship between English and employability in the Middle East and North Africa*, available online at: <http://oro.open.ac.uk/id/eprint/44825> (accessed on 1 August 2016).
- Eyres, I. (in press) 'Writing and identity' in Cremin, T. and Locke, T. (ed.) *Writer identity and the teaching and learning of writing*, London, Routledge.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2010) 'Exploring the professional role identities of experienced ESL teachers through reflective practice', *System*, vol. 39, pp. 54-62.
- Floyd, A. (2012) 'Narrative and Life History' in A. Briggs, M. Coleman & M. Morrison (ed.), *Research Methods in Educational Leadership and Management* (Third ed.), London, Sage, pp. 223-235.

- Floyd, A. (2016) 'Leadership identity in a small island developing state: the Jamaican context', *Compare: A journal of comparative and International Education*, vol. 46, no. 2, pp. 251–271.
- Fraenkel, J. R. and Wallen, N. E. (2006) *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (sixth edition), New York, McGraw-Hill companies, Inc.
- Hammersley, M. (2015) *An Introduction to Social Research*, United Kingdom, The Open University Press.
- Helms, J. V. (1998) 'Science –and Me: Subject Matter and Identity in Secondary School Science Teachers', *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, vol. 35, no. 7, PP. 811-834.
- Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2008) 'The free association narrative interview method' in Given, L. M. (ed) *The SAGE Encyclopaedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, Sevenoaks, California: Sage, pp. 296-315.
- Jacob, S.A & Furgerson, S.P. (2012) 'Writing Interview Protocols and Conducting Interviews: Tips for Students New to the Field of Qualitative Research', *The Qualitative Report*, vol. 17, no. 6, pp. 1-10.
- Josselson, R. (2011) 'Narrative Research. Constructing, Deconstructing, and Reconstructing Story' In F. J. Wertz, K. Charmaz, L.M. McMullen, R. Josselson, R. Anderson, and E. McSpadden, *Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis: Phenomenological Psychology, Grounded Theory, Discourse Analysis, Narrative Research, and Intuitive Inquiry*, Guilford Publications, New York, pp. 224-242.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Lasky, S. (2005) 'A sociocultural approach to understanding teacher identity, agency and professional vulnerability in a context of secondary school reform', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 20, pp. 899-916.

Les Assises de l'Education du Sénégal, Ministère de l'éducation du Sénégal, du 28 au 30 aout 2014.

Lim, H. (2011) 'Concept maps of Korean EFL student teachers' autobiographical reflections on their professional identity formation', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 27, pp. 969-981.

McLure, M. (1993) 'Arguing for Your Self: identity as an organising principle in teachers' jobs and lives', *British Educational Research Journal*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 311-322.

Miller, J. (2009) 'Teacher Identity' in A. Burns, and J.C. Richards (ed.) *The Cambridge Guide to Second Language Teacher Education*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 172-181.

Miyazaki, T. (2016) 'Is changing teaching practice the mission impossible? A case study of continuing professional development for primary school teachers in Senegal', *Compare: A journal of comparative and International Education*, vol. 46, no. 5, pp. 701-722.

Oruç, N. (2012) 'Early teacher identity development', *Procedia- Social and Behavioral[sic] Sciences*, vol. 70, pp. 207-212.

Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz M. S., Green, C. A., Wisdom J. P., Duan, N. and Hoagwood, K. (2015) 'Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research', *Adm Policy Ment Health [sic]*, vol. 42, pp. 533-544.

Penuel, W. R. & Wertsch, J.V. (1995) 'Vygotsky and Identity formation: A sociocultural Approach', *Educational Psychologist*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 83-92.

Pillen, M.T., Brok, P.J.D., & Beijaard, D. (2013) 'Profiles and change in beginning teachers' professional identity tensions', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 34, pp. 86-97.

Programme National d'Anglais du Sénégal. 2006 (3eme edition), Ministere de l'Education.

Rodgers, C. R., & Scott, K. H. (2008) 'The development of the personal self and professional identity in learning to teach' in M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, D. J. McIntyre, & K. E. Demers (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education: Enduring questions and changing contexts* (3rd. ed.), New York, Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group/Association of Teacher Educators, pp. 733-755.

Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2013) 'Struggling for a professional identity: Two newly qualified language teachers' identity narratives during the first years at work', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 30, pp. 120-129.

Sachs, J. (2001) 'Teacher professional identity: Competing discourses, competing outcomes', *Journal of Educational Policy*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 149-161.

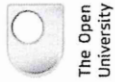
Seidman, I.E. (1991) *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Smit, B. & Fritz, E. (2008) 'Understanding teacher identity from a symbolic interactionist perspective: two ethnographic narratives', *South African Journal of Education*, vol. 28, pp. 91-101.

Sylla, A. (1992) 'L'École : quelle réforme ?' in M. C. Diop (éd.) *Sénégal : Trajectoires d'un État*, Dakar, Codesria, pp. 379-429.

- Thiam, M. (2013) *Tid Bits for Teachers of English as a Foreign Language: From Practice ToTheory*, Dakar, Diaspora Academy Press.
- Watson, C. (2006) 'Narratives of practice and the construction of identity in teaching', *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, vol. 12, no. 5, pp. 509-526.
- Welmond, M. (2002) 'Globalization viewed from the periphery: The dynamics of teacher identity in the Republic of Benin', *Comparative Education Review*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 37-65.
- Yates, S. J. (2004) *Doing Social Science Research*, London, Sage.
- Yürekli, A. (2013) 'The six-category analysis: a classroom observation reference', *ELT journal*, vol. 67, no. 3, pp. 302-312.

Appendix A: Permission Request Letter



The Open University

Walton Hall

Milton Keynes

United Kingdom

MK7 6AA

Research Student: Dame Diop

Department: CREET/FELS

Dear (headteacher' name),

I am writing this letter requesting a permission to conduct research in your school. I am a research student at the Open University, England, UK. I am undertaking a research project on the formation of Teacher Professional Identity of teachers of English for my MRes dissertation (the first stage of my doctorate study). In the process of collecting data, I would like to interview and audio – record some of your teachers of English, observe them in class and participate in one or two pedagogical cell meetings. The classroom observation will be focussed on how teachers deliver their lessons (maximum 2h each). No specific information about students will be recorded. As for my participation in cell meetings, my focus will be on how it is carried out and how teachers participate in it. In either case, there will be no video or audio recording; I will just observe teachers and take notes.

The research aims at giving more insights about the formation of teacher professional identity and the different elements that have an influence on it such teachers' personal experiences, education, and the school culture. Another objective is to see how teacher professional identity impacts on teachers' practice. The expected outcomes of this research are twofold. Firstly, it will hopefully increase general understanding about teacher professional identity in the context of Senegal and other similar contexts. Secondly, as an in-service teacher trainer, having more insights about teacher professional identity will definitely help me to better do my job.

If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me at dame.diop@open.ac.uk or my supervisor at 0044 1908858082 or via freda.wolfenden@open.ac.uk.

Many thanks in advance.

Yours sincerely

Dame Diop

Appendix B: Permission form

To whom it may concern

Permission to conduct research.

I the undersigned, the head teacher of “.....”, after having read the information provided in the permission request letter, hereby authorise Mr Dame Diop, research student at the Open university of the UK, to conduct his research in our school. This permission allows him to interview and observe teachers who have agreed to participate in his study during lessons of their choice and to participate in cell meetings held in the period of his study. He has ensured us that all collected data will be treated with strict confidentiality and stored with maximum security measures.

School's Name: _____

Headteacher's Name: _____

Headteacher's Signature: _____ Date _____

(The school's stamp will be added)

Appendix C: Permission Request Letter (French Version)

The Open University

Walton Hall

Milton Keynes

United Kingdom

MK7 6AA

Nom de l'Etudiant Chercheur: Dame Diop**Faculte:** CREET/FELS

A monsieur le Proviseur du,

Monsieur,

Je viens par la présente solliciter auprès de votre autorité une permission pour mener une étude de recherche dans votre établissement. Je suis formateur au CRFPE de Dakar et en même temps étudiant chercheur à l'université dénommée "The Open University" du Royaume Uni. Je fais une recherche sur la formation de l'identité professionnelle des professeurs d'anglais dans le cadre de mon mémoire de fin d'études de Master en Recherche (Première étape de mes études doctorales). Pour la collecte de données, je voudrais interviewer vos professeurs d'anglais, les observer en classe et participer aux rencontres de la cellule pédagogique qui seront tenues lors de la période de recherche. L'observation sera principalement axée sur la manière dont les professeurs déroulent leurs leçons (environ 2heures). Aucune information sur l'identité des élèves ne sera prise. En ce qui concerne ma participation aux cellules, mon attention sur la manière dont elles sont tenues et comment les professeurs y participent. En aucun cas, il n'y aura pas d'enregistrement audio ou vidéo ; je vais juste observer et prendre notes.

Cette recherche a comme objectif principal d'apporter plus d'aperçu sur la formation de l'identité professionnelle de l'enseignant et les différents facteurs qui ont une influence sur elle tels que l'expérience personnelle, l'éducation, et l'environnement de l'établissement. L'autre objectif est de voir comment l'identité professionnelle se manifeste sur la pratique de l'enseignant. Les retombées de cette recherche sont doubles. En premier lieu, elle va accroître notre compréhension de l'identité professionnelle dans le contexte sénégalais et ceux qui sont similaires. Deuxièmement, en tant que formateur en formation continuée, avoir une meilleure compréhension de l'identité professionnelle des enseignants va sûrement nous permettre d'améliorer notre travail.

Si vous avez des questions concernant cette recherche, veuillez me contacter par email via dame.diop@open.ac.uk ou par téléphone au 77416 76 20 ou joindre mon encadreur via freda.wolfenden@open.ac.uk ou par téléphone au 00441908858082 .

Monsieur le proviseur, je vous prie de bien vouloir accepter mes salutations distinguées.

Dame Diop

Appendix D : Permission Form (French version)

Inspection d'Académie de Rufisque

Lycée

Je soussigné, Monsieur le proviseur du, après avoir lu les informations fournies par Monsieur Dame Diop, Etudiant chercheur à « The Open University » du Royaume Uni, lui autorise à mener sa recherche sur l'identité professionnelle de l'enseignant dans notre établissement. Cette permission lui permet d'interviewer et d'observer les professeurs d'anglais qui ont accepté de participer à cette étude et de participer aux rencontres pédagogiques tenues au cours de la période de collecte de données. Cette recherche ne perturbera, en aucune manière, le déroulement normal des cours. Il nous a rassuré que toutes les données seront traitées en toute confidentialité et gardées en toute sécurité.

Nom de l'Etablissement:

Nom du proviseur :

Signature du proviseur :

Date :

Appendix E: Consent form for individual teachers



The Open University

Walton Hall

Milton Keynes

United Kingdom

MK7 6AA

Research Student: Dame Diop

Department: CREET/FELS

Consent form for individual participants (teachers)

Title of study: Self-perceptions of Professional Identity: A Case study of teachers of English of a secondary school in Senegal.

Introduction

You are invited to voluntarily participate in a research study about Teacher Professional Identity. Your refusal to participate will not have any negative implications.

Please read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to be in the study. Tick the box of each point to show that you have fully understood it.

Purpose of Study

This research project is for my MRes dissertation at the Open University, UK. In this research project, I want to investigate self-perceptions of teacher professional identity with secondary school teachers of English. I want to find out the different things, mainly those related to personal learning and teaching experiences and to the school environment, which have significant influence on professional identity and the relationship between teacher professional identity and practice.

Read and understood: ☐

Description of the Study Procedures

If you accept to participate in this study, you will be interviewed at first to mainly talk about your views about teaching, your teaching experience. After that, you will be observed teaching a lesson and finally interviewed again to get your impressions about the lesson and to make any necessary comments on the way you teach.

Read and understood: ☐

Risks of taking part in this Study

There is no reasonable expected risk in participating in this study.

Read and understood: ☐

Confidentiality

This study is anonymous and strictly confidential. No information about your identity will be used when analysing the data nor included the report.

Read and understood: ☐

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without penalty. You can withdraw from the project at any point up to the end of the fieldwork stage of the project (10th June, 2016) by informing me that you no longer want to participate. If you withdraw by then, you can request that any information you have previously given is destroyed.

Read and understood: ☐

Right to Ask Questions

You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you need any further information about the study at any time feel free to contact me at dame.diop@open.ac.uk or my supervisor at 0044 1908858082 or via freda.wolfenden@open.ac.uk.

In the event of complaint, you can also contact my supervisor.

Read and understood: ☐

Consent

- Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by me.
- Read and understood: ☐

Participant's Name: _____

School's Name and address: _____

Participant's signature. _____ **Date** _____

Researcher's Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Appendix F: Information Sheet for Teacher Participants

Name
.....

Academic qualifications (optional):
.....
.....
.....

Professional qualifications (optional)
.....
.....
.....

Teaching experience: years.

School(s) you have worked at:

| Name of the School | From | To |
|--------------------|------|----|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Email address:
.....

Telephone number:
.....

Appendix G: List of main interview questions

1. Tell me about your first years of teaching (with/without initial training).
2. Why did you choose to be a teacher?
3. How would you define teaching in few words?
4. Tell me about a lesson you have recently taught.
5. On what (knowledge) do you base the way you teach?
6. How do you see yourself as a teacher?
7. Has the way you see yourself as a teacher ever changed? If yes, tell me about that change. If no, why?
8. Has anyone/anything in your life been influential for the way you teach? Why is it so?
9. Can you remember a lesson you think was your best? Talk me through it. Why do you see it as such?
10. Have you ever made a major change of the way you teach? If yes, what was it and why?
11. Tell me about a lesson that did not go as well as you hoped.
12. Have you ever been confronted with any difficulties in your career?
13. If yes, what was it? How did you manage to overcome it/them? Who/What did you resort to?
14. Do you think that your pedagogical cell/school can help you be a better teacher? How?
15. What do you see as the most helpful thing in teaching? Why?
16. Will you continue being a teacher? Why/ Why not?

Appendix H: Three different definitions of a teacher

A subject matter expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on subject matter knowledge and skills.

A didactical expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes.

A pedagogical expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional, and moral development.

Adapted from: Beijaard, D., Verloop, N. & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: an exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. Vol.16, pp.749-764.

Appendix I: Observation Sheet

Fieldwork in Senegal

Observation Sheet

Teacher: Class:..... Date:
Time:

| Activities and Procedures | Interaction | Timing |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------|
| | | |
| Summary: | | |

Appendix J: Example of an interview transcripts

Researcher (R): Good afternoon Mr A. Thank you for agreeing to have this interview with me. I really appreciate the time you are going to be with me. Can you tell me about your first years of teaching?

Mr A (A): As you said my name is A....., I am a teacher of English. Well, talking about my first years of teaching, I started as a part-time teacher known as ‘vacataire’ in the system. I taught for two years as a vacataire and three more years as “professeur contractuel”. I got into it because, anyway, for me it was a vocation and I would like to teach anyway. At the time, I had my BA and I realised that I could help, I could do something as a teacher and got into the system and I started.

R: So you started your teaching career without initial training?

A : Yes, without initial training, that’s it.

R: How were your first years then?

A: Anyway, it was a little bit hard but anything implies willingness and research. You know as a student you have an idea about teaching, you’ve been taught for more than ten years, so you know about teaching a little bit. Then with academic knowledge and er ... when you get in touch with a tutor that can help you er... give you some guidelines you can work if you like .

R: Did you have any difficulties in your first years of teaching without any initial training?

A: Well... not at all. The only difficulty I had was related to overcrowded classes and the distance from my house to my working place. After that I could mention, you know lack of material, you know, teaching materials at that time in CEM X, if I remember and the rest

was maybe when you start a job it is hard for the first few days but after all you get accustomed doing it er..

R: Right.

A: ... at the Junior high where was teaching at that time.. er.. er.. if not I did not meet any big deal or difficulty because I had a good tutor, Mr S... and with my background knowledge on teaching, you know, I did my best anyway.

R:. If I asked to define teaching in few words what would you say?

A: As I used to say teaching is a combination of scientific ...er... er knowledge and art..

R:: What do you mean by art?

A: I mean.. art the fact of being creative, you know... that comes from you, being a good communicator, you know ..and I mean science that pedagogy you get from your training and in my case I didn't have a training but anyway, I was crafted enough to be able to implement a certain number of things. You see.

R: Interesting. Ok, why did you choose to be a teacher?

A: Waw! Interesting question! (laughter). In fact, you know, I taught in a primary school. You know, in my house, almost all my brothers are teachers, my elder brother, you know, almost all my brothers are in the system, the teaching system. So I started...when I taught there in a primary school, when my elder came he saw what I wrote on the board he could not believe it, he asked me "Who did this?" I told him "it's me". " so you've teaching some students?" "I've just been helping some students, giving them private courses like this, you know. He said: 'you are a good teacher to be. The way you exploit the

blackboard, I realise you can be good teacher, with a good teacher you can be a good teacher’.

R: So we can say that your brother influenced you to become a teacher.

A: And I said Ok. Really my career should be teaching. And I said I am not going to look for anything else, just let me teach and see.

R: Are you enjoying it now?

A: Yes, I am enjoying it.

R: Why? Why do think you are enjoying it.

A: Well, when I am at school. I am happy when I go back home I am happy and I like doing the job anyway.

R: Is it because you love English or you just realise that you are helping people?

A: Both. Yes, I love English. I was in a scientific stream when I was a student. If I followed that track, I would be a doctor or working in scientific area. When I came up to lower sixth er.. er upper sixth, I changed. I said since I speak English very well, I like English, I am doing well, I am very good at English, I was the chairperson of my English club in the high school so I said I am gonna follow English in my future career I would be at the English teaching department at the university when I get my ‘baccalaureat’.

R: I think that we’ve got similar stories.....so how do you usually teach when you are in class?

A: Yeah when I in class anyway, I prepare, whatever I teach I prepare it but I base my teaching er . on real life situations and er.. the students’ needs also and I focus on speaking.

R: Communication.

A: Yeah very much on speaking.

R: If I give you these three definitions adapted from Beijjaard et al. which one do you think fits more to you or do you see yourself as all three of them?

A: In fact, it is difficult to answer, because all the three definitions fit to a teacher when you are in but anyway I'm didactical and pedagogical, I'm both. ... I even more didactical than pedagogical but anyway when you teach for a long time you realise that you gaining more experience and more knowledge about the system and you adapt your teaching to the situation anyway.

R: Right. Does it happen to you to help students in terms of growing up; not just learning English but growing up?

A: Yes, I do that all the time. Before even starting my class, most of the time I spend two or three minutes explaining certain things you know situations, giving them, you know, advice vis a vis to life, what we expect from them, how they should behave and so and so forth; preparing them.

R: So you've been very pedagogical. Ok, has the way you see yourself changed over time in your 15 years of being a teacher?

A: Well, a little bit, anyway er... a little bit. There are some changes because I am teaching, I have experience now I move out to teach grown-ups and this fact of teaching grown-ups has in some way or another influenced my teaching kids here at school, you know, I'm more prepared and more relaxed when I am in class you know and for me it's development anyway.

R: You have gained pedagogical skills. Ok. Has anyone been influential to the way you teach not being a teacher but to the way you teach?

A: er..er..yes, ...yes.

R: Who?

A: You know, when I was in CUES, 'Chaire de L'UNESCO en sciences de l'éducation' I learnt a lot and some teachers over there influenced my teaching because they directed me and now I take into account those considerations while implementing a course.

R: Can you give an example when you took account of those considerations.

A: For example Mme... influenced me because she was holding the course of "psychologie de l'apprentissage" learning psychology and from her I really changed certain approaches you know because I knew cognitivism, behaviourism, all those, you know, aspects, er... that are very important in the teaching learning process and I take them into account.

R: I see that knowing all those pedagogical theories has been very influential in the way you teach. Can you remember a lesson you think was your best, or very good?

A: Plenty of that (laughter).

R: Can give me an example?

A: anyway, um er..for example I taught a lesson on forum on surrogate motherhood. It was a speaking-focused lesson and it was very good and implemented in several classes.

R: Can you go through the different steps that you followed when you were teaching that lesson?

A: Yes of course. If I remember, er .. I gave a realia to students for brainstorming and then we discussed the issue and after er um.. I gave them a text, em.. it was a kind of forum where we have approximatively five or six interveners and they took the floor those people

and had, you know, different ideas, confronted ideas about the issue of surrogate motherhood now it was upon the students to read the different positions and ideas and then say in pairs, working in pair, who is against and who is for surrogate motherhood you know after doing that they explained why these persons were against and why they were for. That brings discussion in the class, you know, and after all they got out of the context to talk about for example abortion, now they could, I divided them into groups and each group take one issue, abortion, drug abuse, rape something like that and they tried to be for or against defending their positions and giving, er making a report and choosing reporter to come and report to the class. Right after that there was a debate. I realised that if you er if you involve, I am sorry, if you involve students through the teaching learning process giving them opportunities to speak, they can even surprise you sometimes, you see pupils talk a lot, it was very dynamic I liked it and said alright and I had to, I really repeated again in some classes at different levels and was Ok.

R: It was, if I understand what you are saying, it was learner-centred?

A: Yes. It was learner-centred; it was really learner-centred.

R: Is it something that you do often. I mean to really give learners responsibilities in learning?

A: Yeah. I do it very often. You know I ask them to work in pairs. Sometimes we have some debates in class, and we have some special course called classroom debate I .. I initiated that because I said three hours in upper sixth is not enough let me add an hour that will allow students to discuss an issue for one hour it's good.

R: and that may help them in their writing.

A: yeah.

R: Another question but a very simple one. Today, you are learner-centred, have you always been like this since the beginning?

A: No, at the beginning, ... I taught as my former teachers would teach me. As I said at the beginning I had no training from ENS, I just had an experience from the teaching system because I had been a student for more than ten years in junior high, in high school and at the university and I knew a little bit about teaching and with my academic knowledge, I tried to do my best but after training, after years of teaching, after gaining experience, I realised that, OK, I got to do something else, I moved into bringing new strategies, you know, involving more the students and what strikes me is er..when I meet a singer who hasn't been to school or who's a dropout, when I meet, you know, ordinary people who speak English because they have travelled, they are in the industry of music, they speak a little bit and they do well. Now when I see my students, they learn English for seven years but after, and having sometimes rather good marks because 14 in English is rather a good mark anyway, but they can't tell you the way to the market and I say are we really teaching English? And I say I think I should change but the problem is the system is too exam-focused, there is a BFEM and after all there is a Bac so they learn for these two steps. I say should we always, you know, based our teaching on these two exams? I think we should learn English in order to speak because English is a spoken language and tried to change, I focussed on speaking. I say Ok I will try my best to get you to speak English within the three years, I'm gonna teach you, or within the nine months I gonna teach you.

R: OK. If I get your point your teachers were not communicative ones, were not learner-centred teachers, those who taught you?

A: Not all. you know, I was in the high school, it's long time now. I remember a little bit about my teachers but er not at all.

R: Have you had a lesson which was not as well as you hoped?

A: Well, yes, yes. I taught a listening a class but after all there was a problem because the power was off, no electricity so I was obliged to stop er I did not have enough materials, batteries, to go on because I used and OHP and this functions with electricity so I was obliged to cut it short. It did not work anyway.

R: It was rather a technical problem than a procedural problem?

A: Yeah... it was that.

R: It was not from you?

A: No, No..

R: Have you had any lesson that was not really.. in which you were not confronted with a technical problem, material problem, but which you were no satisfied with?

A: Yeah, it happens. I can't remember but it happens. I prepare, I come, I try to implement but, you know, the feedback I have from students, my expectations I don't meet them, I realise that they didn't do well and er.. I say anyway, I have to prepare again ..and maybe I have to change, I have to do this... it happens..

R: Ok, you reflect on this on it. This is teaching...

A: Yeah, when it happens I don't feel well I am angry (laughter)

R: Right. Have you had any difficulty related to teaching in your teaching career?

A: Yes, I do have some difficulties related to teaching materials. You know I use ICT, you know OHP, screen, and what I would like to have is an available screen for me or for the cell and available material but most of the time we don't have those material and it hinders em.. er.. the teaching process er it's not good anyway.

R: If it happens to you what or who do you resort to?

A: Well they always tell you, we don't have material, something like that, sometimes we even use our own money to buy some paper,,, yeah....

R: ..to do your job well.

A. Anyway, I am committed in all the activities in the school, I am the coordinator of the English club, and the coordinator of a group of master minds, you know I coach students most of the time.

R: So you are..., er.. I mean, would you consider yourself as a good teacher?

A: No, No...

R: why?

A: Being a good teacher, er.. it depends. I can't tell myself I am a good teacher unless somebody....

R: But do you think you are doing what a good teacher should be doing?

A: I think that I am on the right track, now it depends on how people will judge me. But for myself, I don't have any doubt that I'm doing well, I'm on the right track.

R: It is just because humility that you are saying this but you may be a good teacher and I think you are a good as well... Can you tell me about your pedagogical cell?

A: Waw, here in Lycee.....?

R: Yeah.

A: The pedagogical cell is not really functioning. We don't, we don't meet very often, we just meet in order to coordinate for the "Compositions" or just to sketch out commons tests or to sketch the yearly planning but after all we don't often meet.

R: But as a whole from your teaching experience, has the pedagogical cell been influential on the way you teach?

A: Not all. The local pedagogical cell. No.

R: What about the mixed cell?

A: The mixed cell, yes. The cell, it is a framework of exchange and sharing ..it does help anyway.

R: So, if I say that your identity as a teacher is someone who creative, a creative teacher ..and learner centred teacher, would you say yes?

A: Yes, I'm creative and learner-centred because I got feedback from my students even those I taught few years ago, they would come back and report, they tell me 'Mr A..., we are at the English department because of you, we followed your advice and then now we are students and we are doing our BA degree" they come up to me and saying 'all that you were teaching us, all the advice you were giving us we realise it's ... really true, from those feedbacks I know that I am learner-centred, I am doing my job..

R: Do you always take into account these principles of learner-centredness when you are teaching?

A: Yes.

R: Always?

A: Yes, yes, always, always .. but not at the same degree you know depending on the lesson I am implementing but I do take into account that fact.

R: Ok, what do you see as the most helpful thing when you are teaching?

A: What can help me in my teaching?

R: Yes, something which is very.... the most helpful thing in your teaching?

A: Yes, to have er.. er motivated students because this generation (laughter) they are not really motivated they can spend money on buying phones, very nice cell phones, very nice shoes and clothes but they never spend time you know on reading back their lessons, you know, coming with a good will of taking lessons and so. If I have you know students who are ready to take lessons, you know, who do well most of the time. What else could help me is to have the materials I need, if I have it anyway, I can do well in my teaching and what I resent, what I don't like is our board, chalk and board, I think we should have white board with er.. pens, white board pens and so on.

R: what do you think of the relationship between colleagues in your high school? What can this relationship be used for?

A: Well, I don't think there is strong relationship as, it depends on what you mean by relationship.

R: Professional relationship, I mean.

A: Not big relationship in terms of profession, no. They come, they do their job I also come I do my job. They don't report they don't tell us what they did, everybody prepares their lessons and they come and implement it. It happens sometimes just times.

R: Are happy with that environment?

A: No. I would like to know, and come to their class and know what they are doing observe them and maybe exchange that what I would like but some teachers are reluctant to get.. to have people in their classrooms. I don't know, I tried it when I was in P. Est, it worked because I got all the teachers to come to see each other class and then brainstorm and do some feedback and observe and so and so but here I can't do it everybody is just

you know staying in their corner and doing what they do but when it comes to 'compositions' we implement the same topic, when it comes to common tests it's alright but when comes to teaching practice they don't share, they don't share at all.

R: Where do you see yourself in five years?

A: yeah, in five years, you know, I would like to move to the BSI, you know, to value my experience over there and as you see I still be in the teaching system anyway as I....

R: So you see yourself in five years as a teacher?

A: Yeah, as a teacher yeah.

R: Yeah, maybe one of the last questions, what do think teachers should do if they want to improve their teaching skills?

A: I think the government should do something, in training teachers a very good training.

R: In-service training?

A: Yeah, in-service training and for this... they should have a high academic degree. First for this generation I require a Master degree before getting in the system and good training because the level is too low and next, what teacher should do is er....to collaborate, collaborate and then also to have, you know, they call it 'suppleants' in primary school. What I don't understand is when a teacher is ill or is not here, is missing there is nobody to replace him or her..... we should have cover teachers.. to cover hours for those teachers. I tried to explain this to, you know, my headmaster but he could not understand it. And what also they should do is to let students who missed some test to be able to er.. to take the test again in another time if there is an opportunity.

R: Yes, I think it is a matter of fairness. Ok, Mr A.. thank you very much for your time.

A: Thank you for interviewing me.

R: I was really happy to have this interview with you, I really appreciate it.

A: The pleasure is shared.

R: Thank you very much.

A: You are welcome.